# JOURNAL

OF A

# VOYAGE

TO

# NORTH-AMERICA.

BRITISH MUSEUM

# A MAP OF THE WESTERN OCEAN

*Intended to Illustrate the VOYAGE made by F. CHARLEV*

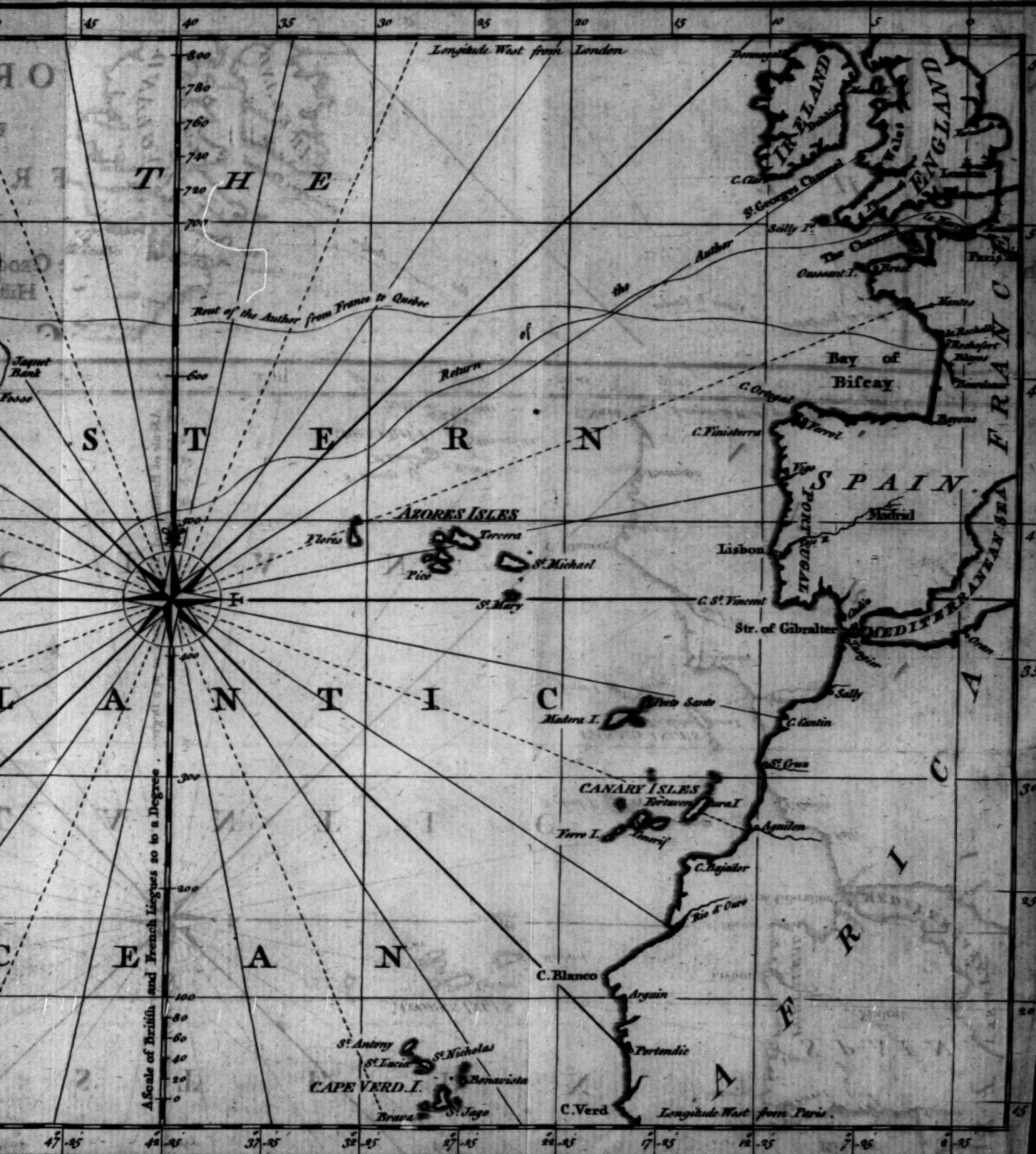
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# AN AND PART OF NORTH AMERICA.

## EVOIX the Jesuit in 1720, to CANADA, LOUISIANA, & S.T DOMINGO.

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# JOURNAL
OF A
# VOYAGE
TO
# NORTH-AMERICA.

Undertaken by ORDER of the

## FRENCH KING.

CONTAINING

The GEOGRAPHICAL Deſcription and Natural Hiſtory of that Country, particularly

## CANADA.

TOGETHER WITH

An Account of the CUSTOMS, CHARACTERS, RELIGION, MANNERS and TRADITIONS of the original Inhabitants.

In a Series of Letters to the Ducheſs of LESDIGUIERES.

Tranſlated from the French of P. DE CHARLEVOIX.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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# THE CONTENTS OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

*PReliminary discourse on the origin of the* Americans Page 1

LETTER I.

*Historical Journal of a voyage to* America 60

LETTER II.

*Voyage from* Rochelle *to* Quebec; *some remarks on that passage, on the great Bank of* Newfoundland, *and on the River* St. Lawrence 67

LETTER III.

*Description of* Quebec; *character of its inhabitants, and the manner of living in the* French *colony* 99

## LETTER IV.

*Of the* Huron *village of* Loretto. *The cauſes which have prevented the progreſs of the* French *colony of* Canada. *Of the current money* 115

## LETTER V.

*Of the beavers of* Canada; *in what they differ from thoſe of* Europe; *of their manner of building; of the advantage which may accrue to the colony from them; of the hunting of the beaver and muſk-rat* 151

## LETTER VI.

*Voyage from* Quebec *to the* Three Rivers. *Of riding poſt on the ſnow. Of the lordſhips of* New France. *Deſcription of* Beckancourt. *Tradition with reſpect to the origin of the name of the* Stinking River. *Deſcription of the* Three Rivers. *Sequel of the huntings of the* Indians 171

## LETTER VII.

*Deſcription of the Country and Iſlands of* Richelieu *and of* St. Francis. *Of the* Abenaquis *village. Of the ancient fort of* Richelieu, *and of ſuch as were formerly in each pariſh. Shining actions of two* Canadian *Ladies. Of the other huntings of the* Indians 189

## LETTER VIII.

*Deſcription of the Country between Lake* St. Peter *and* Montreal; *in what it differs from that near* Quebec. *Deſcription of the Iſland and City of*

Montreal, *and the country adjacent. Of the ſea-cow, ſea-wolf, porpoiſe, and whale-fiſhery* 211

LETTER IX.

*Of Fort* Chambly, *with the fiſhes, birds, and ſeveral animals peculiar to* Canada. *Of trees common to it with* France, *and of ſuch as are peculiar to this country* 231

LETTER X.

*Of the cauſes of the exceſſive cold in* Canada. *Of the reſources it affords for the ſupport of life. The character of the* French Canadians 253

LETTER XI.

*Of the* Iroquoiſe *village. Of the Fall of* St. Lewis. *Of the different nations inhabiting* Canada 269

LETTER XII.

*Voyage to* Catarocoui. *Deſcription of the country, and of the* Rapides *or Falls in the River* St. Lawrence. *Deſcription and ſituation of the Fort. Character and genius of the languages and nations of* Canada. *Origin of the war between the* Iroquois *and* Algonkins 291

LETTER XIII.

*Deſcription of the country to the river of the* Onnontagués. *Of the flux and reflux in the great Lakes of* Canada. *Manner in which the* Indians *ſing the war-ſong. Of their God of War. Manner of declaring war. Of the collars of* Wampum *or* Porcelain, *and the* Calumet, *with their cuſtoms relating to peace and war* 311

LETTER

## LETTER XIV.

*Deſcription of the country from the* Anſe de la Famine *to the* Riviere des Sables. *Motives of the* Indians *for going to war. Departure of the warriors for the campaign, with what precedes their ſetting out. Their manner of taking leave of their relations and countrymen. Their arms offenſive and defenſive. Their care in taking along with them their tutelary gods. Particularities of the country as far as* Niagara 325

## LETTER XV.

*Tranſactions between the* Tſonnonthouans *(a tribe of the* Iroquois) *and the* Engliſh, *on occaſion of building a* French *fort at* Niagara. *Deſcription of the country. Fire-dance; ſtory on this occaſion. Deſcription of the Fall of* Niagara 343

## LETTER XVI.

*Firſt reception of the priſoners. Triumph of the warriors. Diſtribution of the captives; in what manner their fate is decided, with what happens afterwards. The inhumanity with which thoſe are treated who are condemned to death. The courage they ſhew. Negotiations of the* Indians 367

2 JY 61

# Preliminary Diſcourſe

ON THE

# ORIGIN

OF THE

# *AMERICANS.*

AFTER reading almoſt every thing that has been writ on the manner in which America might have been peopled, we ſeem to be juſt where we were before this great and intereſting queſtion began to be agitated; notwithſtanding, it would require a moderate volume to relate only the various opinions of the learned on this ſubject. For moſt part of them have given ſo much into the marvellous, almoſt all of them have built their conjectures on foundations ſo ruinous, or have had recourſe to certain reſemblances of names, manners, cuſtoms, religion and languages, ſo very frivolous, which it would, in my opinion, be as uſeleſs to refute, as it is impoſſible to reconcile with each other.

It is not, perhaps, to be wondered at, that thoſe who have firſt treated this matter, ſhould wander in

a way which had not as yet been marked out, and in which they muſt travel without a guide. But what I am ſurprized at is, that thoſe who have gone deepeſt into this affair, and who have had the advantage of helps beyond all thoſe who have gone before them, ſhould have been guilty of ſtill greater miſtakes, which at the ſame time they might eaſily have avoided, had they kept to a ſmall number of certain principles, which ſome have eſtabliſhed with ſufficient judgment. The ſimple and natural conſequences they ought to have drawn from them, would have been, in my opinion, ſufficient to ſatisfy and determine the curioſity of the publick, which this unſeaſonable and erroneous diſplay of erudition throws back into its original uncertainty. This is what I flatter myſelf I ſhall be able to make appear, by that ſmall portion of theſe conjectures which I am now going to relate.

Thoſe of our hemiſphere were, no doubt, much ſurprized, when they were told of the diſcovery of a new world in the other, where they imagined nothing was to be ſeen, but an immenſe and dangerous ocean. Notwithſtanding, ſcarce had Chriſtopher Columbus found out ſome iſlands, and amongſt others that of Hiſpaniola, in which he diſcovered gold mines, but he was preſently of opinion, ſometimes that this was the Ophir of Solomon, and at others the Zipangri, or the Cipango of Mark Pol the Venetian. Vatablus and Robert Stephens were likewiſe perſuaded, that it was to America that Solomon ſent fleets in queſt of gold, and Columbus thought he ſaw the remains of his furnaces in the mines of Cibas, by much the fineſt and richeſt of the iſland of Hiſpaniola, and perhaps of all the new world.

Arius Montanus not only places Ophir and Parvaim in the new world, but likewiſe makes Joctan, the ſon of Heber, the founder of Juctan, a chimerical city in Peru; and alſo pretends, that the empire of Peru and that of Mexico, which he will have to be the ſame with Ophir, were founded by a ſon of Joctan of that name. He adds, that another ſon of the ſame patriarch, called in the ſcripture Jobab, was the father of the nations on the coaſt of Paria, and that the eaſtern mountain Sephar, to which Moſes ſays the children of Joctan penetrated after departing from Meſſa, is the famous chain of the Ardes, extending from North to South quite thorough Peru and Chili. The authority of this learned interpreter of the ſcriptures has drawn Poſtel, Becan, Poſſevin, Genebrard, and many others, into the ſame opinion. Laſtly, the Spaniards have aſſerted, that in the time when the Moors invaded their country, part of the inhabitants took refuge in America. They even pretended in the fifteenth century, that they diſcovered certain provinces of their empire, which the misfortunes of thoſe times had robbed them of, and to which, if you believe them, they had an inconteſtable right. Oviedo, one of their moſt celebrated authors, was not afraid to affirm, that the Antilles are the famous Heſperides, ſo much vaunted of by the poets; and that God, by cauſing them to fall under the dominion of the kings of Spain, has only reſtored what belonged to them three thouſand one hundred and fifty years ago in the time of king Heſperus, from whom they had this name; and that St. James and St. Paul preached the goſpel there, which he ſupports by the authority of St. Gregory in his morals. If we add to this what Plato has advanced, that beyond his own iſland of Atalantis, there were a great number of

iſlands, and behind them a vaſt continent, and behind this continent the true ocean, we ſhall find, that the new world was very far from being new to the ancients. What then muſt become of the opinion of Paracelſus, who maintains, that each hemiſphere had its own Adam?

Poſtel, whom I have already cited, and who has made himſelf famous by his adventurous conjectures, believed that all North America was peopled by the Atlantides, inhabitants of Mauritania; and he is the firſt who has made ſuch a difference between the two America's, by means of the Iſthmus of Panama; that according to him, and thoſe who have adopted his opinions, the inhabitants of thoſe two continents have nothing common in their original. But in this caſe, I ſhould rather be for placing with Budbecks the Atalantis in the North, as well as the pillars of Hercules, and maintaining, that North America has been peopled from Scandinavia, than by ſending thither the Moors from the coaſt of Africa. On the other hand, Gomara and John de Lery make the Americans come from the Canaanites, driven out of the promiſed land by Joſhua: Some, on the contrary, make thoſe Iſraelites, whom Salmanazus led captive into Media, paſs into America by the North of Aſia. But Thevet, who believed, like them, that the Iſraelites peopled the new world, concludes, that they muſt have ſpread themſelves over the whole world, from the circumſtance of the finding a tomb with Hebrew characters on it in one of the Azores or weſtern iſlands. This author was miſinformed as to the fact. It was not a tomb that was diſcovered in Corvo, the moſt northernly of thoſe iſlands, but an equeſtrian ſtatue, erected upon a pedeſtal, on which were certain characters, which could not be deciphered.

Au-

Auguſtine Torniel is of opinion, that the deſcendants of Shem and Japhet have paſſed to America, and from thence to the countries lying to the ſouthward of the ſtreights of Magellan, by the way of Japan, and the Continent, to the Northward of the Archipel, or cluſter of iſlands. A Sicilian, whoſe name is Marinocus, makes no doubt of the Romans having ſent a Colony into this country, for which he has no other reaſon, than a report current in his time, that a medal of Auguſtus was found in one of the mines of Peru; as if it had not been more natural to ſuppoſe, that ſome Spaniard had accidentally dropt this medal, when viſiting theſe mines. Paulus Jovius has dreamt that the Mexicans have been among the Gauls, which ridiculous opinion he founds upon the human ſacrifices which thoſe two nations offered to their falſe divinities. But if this pretended reſemblance proves any thing, it would much rather prove that the Gauls had been in Mexico, a people whom we know to have been always of a wandering diſpoſition, and to have peopled many provinces by the colonies they ſent out.

The Friſelanders have likewiſe had their partiſans with reſpect to the origin of the Americans. Juffridus Petri and Hamconius aſſert, that the inhabitants of Peru and Chili came from Friſeland. James Charron and William Poſtel do the ſame honour to the Gauls, Abraham Milius to the antient Celtæ, Father Kirker to the Egyptians, and Robert Le Compte to the Phenicians; every one of them at the ſame time excluding all the reſt. I paſs by a great many other opinions, ſtill leſs tenable than the foregoing, equally founded on ſimple conjecture, and void of all probability, to come to thoſe who have made the deepeſt reſearches into this affair.

The firſt is Father Gregorio Garcia, a Spaniſh Dominican, who having been a long time employed in the miſſions of Peru and Mexico, publiſhed at Valencia in the year 1607, a treatiſe in Spaniſh, on *the Origin of the Indians of the New World*, where he both collects and examines a great number of different opinions on this ſubject. He propoſes every opinion, as if it were ſome theſis or queſtion in philoſophy: names its authors and advocates, ſets down the arguments, and laſtly, anſwers the objections, but gives no deciſion. To theſe he has added the traditions of the Peruvians, Mexicans, and iſlanders of *Haiti*, or Hiſpaniola, all which he was informed of, when on the ſpot. In the ſequel, he gives his own opinion, which is, that ſeveral different nations have contributed to the peopling of America: and here I think he might have ſtopt. This opinion is ſomewhat more than probable, and it appears to me, that he ought to have been contented with ſupporting it, as he does, with ſome arguments drawn from that variety of characters, cuſtoms, languages and religions, obſervable in the different countries of the new world. But he admits ſuch a number of theſe, which the authors of other opinions had before made uſe of, that inſtead of ſtrengthening, he really weakens his own. In the year 1729, Don André Gonzales de Garcia reprinted the work of this Father at Madrid, with conſiderable augmentations; but though he has made many learned additions to it, he has contributed nothing to the farther ſatisfaction of his readers.

The ſecond is Father Joſeph de Acoſta, a Spaniſh Jeſuit, who had likewiſe ſpent a great part of his life-time in America, and has left behind him two very valuable works; one in the Caſtilian language, intituled, *The natural and moral Hiſtory of the Indies*;

*dies*; the other in Latin, the title of which is, *De promulgando Evangelio apud Barbaros, ſive de procuranda Indorum ſalute*. This author, in the firſt book of his hiſtory, after taking notice of the opinion of Parmenides, Ariſtotle, and Pliny, who believed there were no inhabitants between the Tropicks, and that there never had been any navigation farther to the weſtward of Africa than the Canary Iſlands, gives it as his opinion, that the pretended prophecy of Medea in Seneca, could be no more than a bare conjecture of that poet, who, ſeeing that the art of navigation was beginning to receive conſiderable improvements, and not being able to perſuade himſelf that there was no land beyond the Weſtern Ocean, imagined that in a ſhort time ſome diſcoveries would be made on that ſide of the globe. At the ſame time, this Spaniſh hiſtorian looks upon the paſſage I have already cited from the Timæus of Plato, as a mere fiction, in which, in order to ſave his reputation, the diſciples of that philoſopher, zealous for his glory, ſtrained their imagination to find out ſome ingenious allegory.

In his ſixteenth chapter, Father Acoſta begins to examine by what means the firſt inhabitants of America might have found a paſſage to that immenſe Continent, and at the firſt view he rejects the direct and premeditated way of the ſea, becauſe no ancient author has made mention of the compaſs. However, he ſees no improbability in ſaying, that ſome veſſels might have been thrown upon the coaſt of America by ſtreſs of weather, and on this occaſion he mentions *, as a certain fact, the ſtory of a pilot, driven by a tempeſt on the Brazils, who,

* Chap. xix.

at his death, left his memoirs to Chriſtopher Columbus. Afterwards, he takes notice of what Pliny relates concerning ſome Indians, who being driven by bad weather on the coaſt of Germany, were given in a preſent to Quintus Metellus Celes, by the king of the Suevi. In the ſame manner, he finds nothing improbable in the report which goes under Ariſtotle's name, *viz.* that a Carthaginian veſſel having been driven very far to the weſtward by a ſtrong eaſterly wind, the people on board diſcovered lands, which had, till that time, been unknown; and from thoſe facts he concludes, that, according to all appearance, America has, by ſuch like means, received one part of its inhabitants; but adds, that we muſt of neceſſity have recourſe to ſome other way to people that quarter of the world, were it only to account for the tranſportation of certain animals found in thoſe parts, which we cannot reaſonably ſuppoſe to have been embarked on board of ſhips, or to have made ſo long a paſſage by ſwimming.

The way by which this has been done, continues father Acoſta, could only be by the north of Aſia or Europe, or by the regions lying to the ſouthward of the ſtraits of Magellan; and, were only one of theſe three paſſages practicable, we may ſufficiently comprehend how America has been peopled by degrees, without having recourſe to navigation, of which there are no traces in the traditions of the Americans. In order to ſtrengthen this argument, he obſerves, that thoſe iſlands, ſuch as Bermudas, which were too remote from the Continent to ſuppoſe that ſuch ſmall veſſels as were uſed in that part of the world could find their way thither, were upon their firſt diſcovery uninhabited; that the Peruvians teſtified an extreme ſurprize at the firſt ſight of ſhips on their coaſts;

coaſts; and that thoſe animals, ſuch as tygers and lions, which might probably have got thither by land, or at moſt by traverſing ſmall arms of the ſea, were altogether unknown even in the beſt peopled iſlands of that hemiſphere.

In chapter twenty-ſecond, he returns to the Atalantis of Plato, and refutes, with a great deal of gravity, the notion of ſome who believed the reality of this chimera, and who fancied, that there was but a very ſhort paſſage from this imaginary iſland to America. In the following chapter, he rejects the opinion of thoſe who have advanced on the authority of the fourth book of Eſdras, that this vaſt country was peopled by the Hebrews. To theſe he objects, Firſt, that the Hebrews were acquainted with the uſe of characters, which no nation of America ever was. Secondly, that theſe latter held ſilver in no manner of eſtimation, whereas the former have always ſought after it with extreme avidity. Thirdly, that the deſcendants of Abraham have conſtantly obſerved the law of circumciſion, which is practiſed in no part of America. Fourthly, that they have always preſerved with the greateſt care their language, tradition, laws and ceremonies; that they have always, without ceaſing, looked for the coming of the Meſſiah; that ever ſince their diſperſion over all the earth, they have never in the leaſt relaxed from all thoſe particulars; and that there is no reaſon to believe they ſhould have renounced them in America, where not the ſmalleſt veſtige of them remains.

In the twenty-fourth chapter, he obſerves, that in a diſcuſſion of this nature, it is much eaſier to refute the ſyſtem of others than to eſtabliſh any new one, and that the want of writing and certain

tain traditions, have rendered the diſcovery of the origin of the Americans extremely difficult, ſo that nothing could be determined in it without being guilty of great temerity; and that all that can be allowed to the uncertainty of conjecture is, that this great continent has been peopled by degrees in the way we have juſt now mentioned; that he cannot believe theſe tranſmigrations to be very antient, and that according to all human appearance the firſt who attempted this paſſage were hunters, or wandering nations, rather than a civilized people; but even granting the firſt inhabitants of the new world to have been ſuch, there would be but little cauſe to wonder, that their deſcendants ſhould degenerate and vary from the religion and manners of their anceſtors: that the want of ſeveral things was enough to make them forget the uſe of them, and that for want of certain helps for tranſmitting their traditions from age to age, they ſhould come by degrees altogether to forget them, or at leaſt to disfigure them in ſuch manner as to render it impoſſible to diſtinguiſh them: That the example of ſeveral nations of Spain and Italy, who ſeem to have had nothing belonging to the human ſpecies beſides the figure, gives all theſe reaſons a great air of probability: That the deluge, of which the Americans have preſerved the remembrance, does not appear to him to be that ſpoken of in ſcripture, but ſome particular inundation, whereof ſome perſons of great ability pretend there ſtill remain certain marks in America: Laſtly, that it cannot be proved, that the moſt ancient monuments in America are older than the thirteenth or fourteenth century, and that all beyond this is nothing but a confuſed heap of fables and tales, and thoſe ſo very childiſh as to render it impoſſible to form one reaſonable conjecture from them.

The

The third author John de Laët, whoſe opinion I ought to relate, acknowledges that there is a great deal of good ſenſe and ſolid reaſoning in that of father de Acoſta. What he does not approve of is what follows. Firſt, he pretends that the Jeſuit is in the wrong to ſuppoſe that long paſſages by ſea cannot be made, without the help of the needle, ſince we may navigate by the help of the ſtars only; and, that he even ſeems to contradict himſelf, by aſſerting that the compaſs is a late invention, after telling us, that the uſe of it was very antient on the coaſt of Mozambique in the fifteenth Century; that he advances without proof that the Orientals were unacquainted with it, till it had been found out by the people of the weſt; laſtly, that it was very evident either that we could do without it, or that it muſt have been known in the earlieſt times, ſince ſeveral iſlands, even of our hemiſphere, and thoſe at a conſiderable diſtance from the continent, were peopled very ſoon after the deluge.

Secondly, that he relates as a thing certain, the ſtory of the Pilot, from whoſe memoirs it is pretended Chriſtopher Columbus learned the route of the New World, as alſo that of the Indians ſent to Metellus Celer by the king of the Suevi; that we know that the Spaniards ſpread abroad the firſt report merely out of jealouſy of that great man to whom they owed the obligation of having put them in poſſeſſion of ſo many rich countries, and whoſe only misfortune it was not to have been born in Spain; and that the occaſion of their publiſhing the ſecond was only to rob the Portugueſe of the glory of having firſt opened a way to the Indies by ſailing round Africa; that he is deceived if he thinks it poſſible to make the paſſage from Terra Auſtralis to the Streights of Magellan, without croſſing the ſea,

ſea, the diſcovery of the Streights of Le Maire having ſhewn its utter impracticability. The error of Father de Acoſta, if it is one, was, however, excuſable, as at the time when he wrote Le Maire had not as yet diſcovered the Streights which bear his name.

Thirdly, That he makes the peopling of America too late; and that it is contrary to all probability, that this vaſt Continent, and ſome of the iſlands which ſurround it, ſhould have ſo great a number of inhabitants at the end of the fifteenth century, had they only begun to be inhabited two hundred years ſince. John de Laët pretends, that there is no reaſon to think, that the Deluge, the tradition of which is ſtill preſerved amongſt the Americans, is not the univerſal deluge which Moſes mentions in the book of Geneſis.

Beſides the Spaniſh Jeſuit, three other writers, a Frenchman, an Engliſhman, and a Dutchman, who have handled the ſame topick, have paſſed under the examination of this learned Fleming. Theſe are Leſcarbot, Brerewood, and the famous Grotius. He probably knew nothing of the work of Father Garcia, whereof I have already ſpoken, no more than of that of John de Solorzano Pereyra, a Spaniſh lawyer, entituled, *De Jure Indiarum*; whereof the firſt volume, in which the author relates all the opinions of the learned on the origin of the Americans, was printed in 1629.

Be this as it will, Mark Leſcarbot, advocate in the parliament of Paris, was a man of ſenſe and learning, but a little addicted to the marvellous. I have ſpoken of him in ſeveral places of my hiſtory. In relating the different opinions on the preſent queſtion,

tion, which were in vogue in his time, he rejects, as frivolous, the applications made of certain prophecies on this ſubject, and eſpecially that of Abdias, which had been applied to the converſion of the Weſt-Indies by the miniſtry of the French and Spaniards, the only nations who have truly undertaken this great work; for the Portugueſe, to whom the Brazils owe their converſion, may be comprehended under the name of Spaniards, and the miſſionaries of the other nations of Europe who have had a ſhare in the publication of the goſpel in the new World, went thither under the banner of the crowns of France, Spain, and Portugal. In fact, Abdias could poſſibly have had the Idumeans only in view, and there is not a ſingle word in his prophecy that can be applied to America with any degree of probability.

Leſcarbot leans ſomewhat more towards the ſentiment of thoſe who have tranſported into the new world the Canaanites, who were driven out of the promiſed land by Joſhua. He thinks there is at leaſt ſome probability in this notion, becauſe theſe nations, as well as the Americans, were accuſtomed to make their children paſs through the fire, and to feed upon human fleſh, whilſt they invoked their idols. He approves what Father Acoſta ſays of the accidents which might have cauſed certain ſhips to land in America, and alſo with reſpect to the paſſage by the north of Aſia and Europe. He believes that all the parts of the Continent are contiguous, or at leaſt, that if there be any Streight to paſs, like that of Magellan, which he ſuppoſes ſeparates two Continents from each other, the animals which are to be found in the New World might have made their paſſage good notwithſtanding, ſince Jacques Cartier ſaw a bear, as large as a cow, ſwim over an

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arm of the ſea fourteen leagues in breadth. Laſtly, he propoſes his own opinion, which he ſeems to give only by way of ſimple conjecture.

Is it, ſays he, to be believed, that Noah, who lived three hundred and fifty years after the Deluge, ſhould be ignorant that a great part of the world lay beyond the weſtern ocean; and if he did know it, could be deſtitute of means to people it? Was it more difficult to paſs from the Canaries to the Azores, and from thence to Canada, or from the Cape Verd iſlands to Brazil, than from the Continent of Aſia to Japan, or to other iſlands ſtill more remote? On this occaſion he relates, all that the antients, and eſpecially Ælian and Plato, have ſaid of thoſe veſtiges, which according to him ſtill remained in their time, with reſpect to the knowledge of America. He ſees nothing to hinder us from ſaying, that the Heſperides of the ancients were the ſame with the iſlands of the Antilles; and he explains the fable of the Dragon, which according to the poets guarded the golden apples, to be the different ſtreights winding in a ſerpent-like manner round thoſe iſlands, and which the frequency of the ſhipwrecks might have cauſed to be looked upon as unnavigable. To this he adds many geographical obſervations, which are far from being altogether exact, and which John de Laët very well refutes.

The ſame critick juſtly remarks, that if the Canaanites ſacrificed their children to their idols, we, however, read in no place of the ſcripture of their being Anthropophagi. He acknowledges the poſſibility and probability of the paſſage of men and animals into America by the North; and confeſſes, that it is eaſy to conceive that men thus tranſplanted into a deſart and remote country ſhould there become

become ſavage and barbarous; but he looks upon it as a real and moſt ridiculous paradox to ſuppoſe that Noah ever entertained any thoughts of peopling that immenſe Continent. The ill-humour he is in, and which is no doubt excited by ſome of Leſcarbot's arguments, which to tell truth, are far from being without alloy, hinders him from ſeeing what is ſolid and ſenſible in this conjecture. But this proceeding is common enough to the learned; as if truth and probability ceaſed to be ſuch from the mixture of real proofs amongſt thoſe others by which they may happen to be ſupported.

Edward Brerewood, a learned Engliſhman, after having refuted the ill-grounded opinion, which makes all the Tartars deſcend from the Iſraelites, and after ſhowing that the ignorance of the true etymology of the name of Tartar, which comes neither from the Hebrew nor the Syriack, but from the river Tartar, will have the New World to have been entirely peopled from this numerous nation; his proofs are theſe following. Firſt, America has always been better peopled on the ſide towards Aſia, than on that towards Europe. Secondly, the genius of the Americans has a very great conformity with that of the Tartars, who never applied themſelves to any art; which is, however, not univerſally true. Thirdly, the colour of both is pretty much alike; it is certain, the difference is not conſiderable, and is, perhaps, the effect of the climate, and of thoſe mixtures with which the Americans rub themſelves. Fourthly, the wild beaſts that are ſeen in America, and which cannot reaſonably be ſuppoſed to have been tranſported thither by ſea, could only have come by the way of Tartary. Laſtly, he anſwers an objection made to him with reſpect to the circumciſion of the Tartars, and maintains, that this

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rite was never in uſe with that nation, till after they had embraced the Mahometan religion.

De Laët is contented with barely narrating the opinion of this learned Engliſhman, which conſiſts in rejecting the notion of thoſe who make the Tartars deſcendants of the Iſraelites, who were tranſported by Salmanaſar; and in making the Tartars anceſtors to all the Americans. We ſhall ſee what he himſelf thinks, when we come to relate his own opinions on this article. But it is neceſſary in the firſt place, to examine what paſſed between him and the famous Grotius upon this ſubject. The diſpute was very hot on both ſides, and as is uſual in ſuch caſes, only embroiled the queſtion.

In the year 1642, Grotius publiſhed a ſmall treatiſe in *Quarto*, intituled, *De Origine Gentium Americanarum*, which he begins, with ſuppoſing that the Iſthmus of Panama had been looked upon, before the diſcovery of the new world by the Spaniards, as an impenetrable barrier between the two continents of America: whence he concludes, that the inhabitants of both could have nothing common in their original. Milius, whom he does not cite, had advanced this paradox before him. Now, if we may credit the learned Dutchman, excepting Yucatan, and ſome other neighbouring provinces, whereof he makes a claſs apart, the whole of North America has been peopled by the Norwegians, who paſſed thither by way of Iceland, Greenland, Eſtotiland and Narembega. He, notwithſtanding, confeſſes, that they were followed ſome ages after by the Danes, Swedes, and other German nations.

He draws the greateſt part of his proofs from the conformity of their manners, and the reſemblance of

of names. But we muſt acknowledge, that nothing can be farther fetched than theſe pretended reſemblances, of which he ſeems, notwithſtanding, fully perſuaded, though very few will be convinced beſides himſelf. What obliges him to place Yucatan apart by itſelf, is the cuſtom of circumciſion, of which he has taken it into his head to believe, he has found ſome traces in this province, and a pretended ancient tradition amongſt the inhabitants, which ſaid, that their anceſtors had eſcaped being ſwallowed up by the waves of the ſea; and this according to him is what gave riſe to the opinion of ſome that they were deſcended from the Hebrews. Notwithſtanding he refutes this opinion, with much the ſame arguments which Brerewood made uſe of, and believes with Don Peter Martyr d'Anglerie, that the firſt who peopled Yucatan were ſome Ethiopians caſt away on this coaſt by a tempeſt, or by ſome other accident. He is even of opinion, that theſe Ethiopians were Chriſtians, a conjecture which he infers from a kind of baptiſm in uſe in the country. He could not help allowing that the language of the northern Americans is quite different from either the Ethiopian or Norwegian, but this difficulty does not ſtop his career; he ſearches in the beſt manner he can for a ſolution to it, in the mixture of different nations, who, in proceſs of time, eſtabliſhed themſelves in this part of the New World, and in their wandering way of life, and which according to him reduced them to the neceſſity of inventing new jargons.

Hence he paſſes to the nations in the neighbourhood of the Streights of Magellan, and imagining he has found a ſtrong reſemblance between thoſe ſettled on this ſide of it in the Continent of South-America, and thoſe who have their abode beyond

it, he gives it as his deciſion that the former derive their original from the latter, and that theſe as well as the inhabitants of New Guinea have come from the Moluccoes and the iſland of Java. Yet for all that the peculiar genius of the Peruvians, their laws, their cuſtoms, their police, the ſuperb edifices they had built, and the wrecks of Chineſe veſſels, which, he ſays, the Spaniards found at the entry of the Pacifick Ocean, after coming through the Straits of Magellan, permit him not to doubt that this nation is, originally, a Chineſe colony, which is confirmed, adds he, by the worſhip of the Sun, which prevails equally in both empires, by the reſemblance of their characters and manner of writing, and by the reputation of the ancient Chineſe of excelling in the art of navigation. Laſtly, he rejects the Tartar or Scythian original of the Americans from the little conformity that is found according to him between the manners and cuſtoms of both nations: He inſiſts chiefly on the circumſtance of the Americans having no horſes, which we know, ſays he, the Scythians cannot be without. To deſtroy this ſyſtem, it will be ſufficient to prove, that it leads conſtantly to falſe concluſions, a point, which the Flemiſh critick has rendered extremely evident. He proves with equal clearneſs, that Grotius is every whit as unhappy in attacking the opinions of others, as he is in eſtabliſhing his own. In effect, he proves that all the Scythians have not the uſe of horſes, ſeveral of them inhabiting countries utterly incapable of maintaining them; to which he adds, that according to the opinion of thoſe, who pretend that Scythia is not the country whence America has been peopled, it is not neceſſary to ſay, that all thoſe who have penetrated that way into the New World were Scythians or Tartars; that the countries they muſt of neceſſity traverſe, were no way proper for horſes; that

that the cuſtom of the Scythians, when they find themſelves under the neceſſity of croſſing an arm of the ſea, is to kill their horſes, to flea them, and to cover the boats in which they embark with their hides. Laſtly, he maintains, that according to all appearance, theſe tranſmigrations happened very ſoon after the diſperſion of Noah's grandſons, and that at that time, the Scythians and Tartars might as yet be unacquainted with the uſe of horſes.

He proves the antiquity of theſe colonies by the multitude of people inhabiting North-America when it was firſt diſcovered; and as to the pretended impoſſibility of getting paſt the Iſthmus of Panama, he ſhows the abſurdity of it by the few obſtacles the Europeans met with in that paſſage. He afterwards undertakes to ſhew, that the moſt northern Americans have much greater reſemblance, not only in the features of their countenances, but alſo in their complexion, and in their manner of living, with the Scythians, Tartars, and Samoeides, than with the Norwegians and German nations: And with reſpect to what Grotius ſays, in making theſe paſs from Iceland, he very well remarks, that this iſland began to be peopled only towards the end of the ninth century; that even then there paſſed only a few families thither, and that thus this iſland could not preſently be in a condition to ſend over to America ſuch numerous colonies as to have produced ſo many thouſands of inhabitants as repleniſhed thoſe vaſt regions in the fifteenth century.

The route which Grotius makes his Norwegians take, likewiſe furniſhes his adverſary with dangerous weapons againſt him. He makes him obſerve, that Greenland is cut thorough with vaſt and deep arms of the ſea, almoſt always frozen up, that the

whole country is covered with ſnows of a prodigious depth, and which are never entirely melted; that Friezeland, if ſuch a country is in being, can be no more than a part of Greenland, or of Iceland, and that there is no reliance to be had on all that the two Zani's have publiſhed about it: that Eſtotiland, according to the account of theſe two noble Venetians, is at a great diſtance from Friezeland, ſince in their time there was very little correſpondence between theſe two countries, and that it was a matter of pure chance that ſome fiſhermen happened on this latter: that this enchanted kingdom, the monarch of which had ſuch a magnificent library, has entirely diſappeared ſince the diſcovery of the northern parts of America; that Norembega, whither Grotius conducted his Norwegians, is no leſs fabulous; that this name in which this learned man finds with a ſecret complacency ſo ſtrong a conformity with that of Norvegia, or Norway, is not the name of any country, but a fictitious one whereof nobody knows the original; that the natives of the country call it Agguncia; that this country lies very far to the ſouth of the place where Eſtotiland was ſuppoſed to be, ſince it makes part of the ſouth-coaſt of New France, between Accadia and New-England.

Grotius had relied very much on the termination in *are*, ſo common in old and new Mexico. Laët draws him from this intrenchment, by ſhewing that almoſt all of theſe names are modern, and of Spaniſh extraction. He overthrows, with the ſame eaſe, the argument which Grotius drew from the traditions of the Mexicans, by obſerving, that when theſe nations placed themſelves in the neighbourhood of the lake of Mexico, they found great numbers of barbarians, who ſpoke all ſorts of languages, between

tween which there was no manner of affinity or analogy; ſo that after having conquered them, they were obliged to make uſe of interpreters to be able to govern them. This frivolous reſemblance of names likewiſe made Grotius imagine in California a nation called Alavard, which he makes deſcend from the Lombards; Laët, in anſwer, ſays, that the name of Alavard, might poſſibly have no other original than that of *Alvarado*, a Spaniſh Captain, that had followed Ferdinand Cortez into Mexico, and perhaps too into California, of which we know this conqueror made the firſt diſcovery.

Laët, as he goes on, makes it appear, that Grotius is equally unſucceſsful in his attempts to ſhew a conformity of manners, cuſtoms, traditions, and form of government, between the northern Americans and the Norwegians; every thing he advances on that head being founded on falſe memoirs. He then proceeds to conſider the argument which his antagoniſt draws from the pretended circumciſion and baptiſm of the people of Yucatan. He maintains, that it is contrary to all probability to look out for a country ſurrounded by Norwegian colonies for a ſettlement to his Africans, who muſt have been much more naturally ſuppoſed to have landed in Braſil, or at leaſt to have ſtopped at the Antilles, which iſlands they muſt have met with in their paſſage, ſuppoſing them to have croſſed the line. He confeſſes that Don Peter Martyr d' Anglerie, when ſpeaking of the people of Yucatan, affirms, that many of them were circumciſed; but he alledges, that this Italian author has been miſinformed, ſince neither Antonio de Herrera, father de Acoſta, nor Oviedo, writers of much better credit than him, have ever mentioned the circumciſion, baptiſm, or croſſes upon the tombs of this people

but as meer fables. Laſtly, before the Abyſſinians could have paſſed to America, they muſt have taken their departure from the weſtern coaſt of Africk; and Laët is confident, that the dominions of the king of Ethiopia do not extend ſo far that way. In the mean time, it is certain, from the accounts of the Portugueſe, that the king of Benin had his crown of the emperor of Abyſſinia.

Laët ſays but little of the manner in which Grotius imagines South-America has been peopled by the inhabitants of thoſe countries, which lie to the ſouthward of the Streights of Magellan; he is ſatisfied with obſerving that they are only iſlands, beyond which, as far as Terra Auſtralis, there is nothing but an immenſe extent of ocean: that we are not as yet well acquainted with what lies between that country and New Guinea, and that all the ſouthern American nations, not excepting thoſe under the dominion of the incas of Peru, ſpoke an infinite variety of different languages. The reaſons on which Grotius eſtabliſhes the Chineſe original of the Peruvians, appear no leſs frivolous to this critick.

In the firſt place, ſays he, the character of the two nations and their taſte for the arts are extremely different. In the ſecond place no one has ever ſaid that the Chineſe pay any religious adoration to the ſun; and were this even granted, that worſhip is common to ſo many nations, that no arguments could be drawn from hence of any weight in the preſent queſtion. It is true, that the incas of Peru, as well as the Chineſe emperors, called themſelves the deſcendants of the Sun; but how many other princes have either uſurped themſelves, or received that title from their ſubjects: Did not the Mexicans

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give the ſame name to Cortez, either to do him honour, or becauſe he came from the eaſt. In the third place, Grotius is ſtill more groſsly miſtaken in affirming that the Peruvians made uſe of characters like the Chineſe, and which were written like theirs in perpendicular lines, ſeeing that Father Acoſta, who reſided a long time in Peru, and Garcilaſſo de la Vega, deſcended by the mother's ſide from the blood of the incas, inform us that they were neither acquainted with characters, nor had the uſe of any ſort of writing. What is added by the learned Dutchman, that Mango Capa, the firſt of the incas, was himſelf a Chineſe, is no more than a bare conjecture, or a fable invented by ſome traveller, there not being the leaſt notice taken of it in the traditions of Peru.

In the laſt place, Laët declares that he has never, in any author, read of any wrecks of Chineſe veſſels in the Pacifick Ocean. The fact itſelf appears to him very improbable, becauſe in the paſſage from China to Peru, the winds are contrary during the whole year ſo that by making the great round of the ocean by the weſt, would be a ſhorter paſſage, in point of time, than the direct courſe. He adds, that ſuppoſing the Peruvians had deſcended from the Chineſe, they muſt have preſerved at leaſt ſome veſtiges of the art of navigation, or of the uſe of iron, whereas they were acquainted with neither; ſo that it is much more natural to ſuppoſe the Peruvians and their neighbours, the inhabitants of Chili, came from ſome of the Indian nations, ſome of which have always been ſufficiently civilized to be capable of giving birth to an empire ſuch as was that of Peru.

To this Grotius makes anſwer, but with the air of the embaſſador, and of a perſon of profound learning, and ſeems perfectly aſtoniſhed, that any one ſhould dare to contradict him. Laët, ſomewhat piqued at this behaviour, treats him in his reply with leſs ceremony than before; and maintains, that in a diſpute purely literary, the character of an ambaſſador neither gives one writer any manner of advantage over another, nor any additional weight to his reaſoning.

Grotius triumphed upon his adverſary's agreeing that Greenland had been peopled by the Norwegians: See here, ſaid he, one part of America, the inhabitants of which derive their origin from Norway. Now what could have hindered theſe Norwegian Greenlanders from advancing farther? The queſtion is not, anſwered Laët, to determine, Whether or not any of the Northern people paſſed to America by the way of Greenland; but if all the Americans came from Norway, which I maintain to be impoſſible. Angrimus Jonas, an Icelander, affirms, that Greenland was not diſcovered till the year 964. Gomara and Herrera inform us, that the Chichimeques were ſettled on the lake of Mexico, in 721. Theſe ſavages came from New Mexico, and the neighbourhood of California, ſuch is the uniform tradition of the Mexicans: conſequently North-America was inhabited many ages before it could receive any from Norway by the way of Greenland.

It is no leſs certain, that the real Mexicans founded their empire in 902, after having ſubdued the Chichimeques, Otomias, and other barbarous nations, who had taken poſſeſſion of the country round the lake of Mexico; and Father Acoſta tells us, each

each of them ſpoke a language peculiar to themſelves. From other authorities we learn, that the Mexicans themſelves came from California, or from New Mexico, and that they performed their journey at leaſt for the moſt part by land; conſequently, they could not have come from Norway.

Grotius having thus ſet out with an evident anachroniſm, every thing he has built on that foundation is a conſequence of that original error; and his antagoniſt, who, with all the liberty of a Fleming, imagined he had a right to conſider him only as a man of letters, whoſe ſyſtem appeared to him erroneous; and offended at the ſame time, becauſe having attacked him with ſufficient moderation, he had not met with the polite return he expected, fails not to purſue him through all his blunders, and to place them continually before his eyes.

The learned embaſſador imagined he had read in *Herrera*, that the iſlanders of *Baccalaos* bore a perfect reſemblance to the Laplanders. Laët, after declaring he could meet with no ſuch fact in the Spaniſh hiſtorian, repeats what he had already ſaid, that he does not deny but ſome of the Americans might have had their original from Europe; then bringing his adverſary back to Mexico, he aſks him what connection there was between the Mexicans and the inhabitants of the iſland Baccalaos? He acknowledges afterwards, that Herrera mentions a ſort of baptiſm and confeſſion, that were practiſed in Yucatan and the neighbouring iſlands; but he maintains, that the worſhip of thoſe barbarians was mixed with ſo many impieties, and thoſe ſo plainly idolatrous, that it could not reaſonably be ſuppoſed to be derived from the Abyſſinian Chriſtians. He adds,

adds, that it is much more natural to attribute all thoſe equivocal marks of Chriſtianity and Judaiſm, which have been believed to ſubſiſt in divers provinces of the New World, to the Devil, who has always affected to counterfeit the worſhip of the true God. This remark is made by all good authors, who have ſpoken of the religion of nations newly diſcovered, and is beſides founded on the authority of the fathers of the church.

Grotius having advanced, without any heſitation, that the Ethiopians might in time have changed their colour in a climate not ſo ſultry as that which they had quitted, Laët makes anſwer, that though Whites might poſſibly loſe ſome of their colour, by removing to a warmer climate than that where they were born, yet that there is no example of the deſcendants of the Blacks becoming white in a cold country; and that the colour of the Negroes proceeds not ſolely from the heat of the ſun, ſince the Brazilians, and many others inhabiting the ſame latitudes, have it not. Laſtly, he takes notice of another error of Grotius, who ſuffered his prejudices to carry him ſo far, as to be perſuaded that the Chineſe were not acquainted with the art of printing before the arrival of the Portugeſe in their country, that he might thereby obviate an objection which might have been ſtarted againſt his ſyſtem of making the Peruvians deſcend from the Chineſe.

There can nothing, in my opinion, be added to the criticiſm, which John de Laët has publiſhed on the hypotheſis of the celebrated Grotius. We are now going to ſee whether he has been equally happy in eſtabliſhing his own. He ſets out with relating, on the authority of ſome authors quoted by Pliny, but who do not appear to have been very able geographers,

graphers, that in ſome iſlands near the coaſt of Africa, amongſt which are the Canaries, ſome ancient edifices have been ſeen, and which are a certain proof that theſe iſlands were inhabited before they were diſcovered by the Europeans: now it is certain, ſays he, that ſince they were afterwards entirely deſerted, the inhabitants muſt have retired elſewhere; and there is great reaſon to believe that they paſſed over to America, the paſſage being neither long nor difficult.

This migration, according to the calculation of theſe authors, muſt have happened about two thouſand years ago: at that time, the Spaniards were much infeſted by the Carthaginians, and a ſhort while afterwards, no leſs ſo by the Romans. Now is it not natural to think, that ſeveral amongſt thoſe ſhould bethink themſelves of taking refuge in a country, where they might have nothing to fear from the ambition of their enemies; and what could have hindered them from retiring to the Antilles by way of the weſtern iſlands, which are ſituated exactly half way in that voyage? the veſſels of the Carthaginians were very proper for this navigation, and might very well ſerve the Spaniards for models, by which to build others of the ſame conſtruction. They had the ſtill recent example of Hanno, the famous Carthaginian, before their eyes, who had ſailed very far to the weſtward. It is no leſs probable, that people might have croſſed from the Cape Verd Iſlands to Brazil. The Autololes, whom Pliny has placed in their neighbourhood, were Getulians, and not Ethiopians; their colour and manners ſufficiently correſpond with thoſe of the Braſilians.

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Great Britain, Ireland, and the Orcades, appear alſo to the learned Fleming, extremely proper for founding a like conjecture in favour of North America; he relates on this head, what is recorded in the hiſtory of Wales, written by Dr. David Powel, under the year 1170. Madoc, ſays this hiſtorian, one of the ſons of prince Owen Gwynnith, being tired and diſguſted with the civil wars which broke out between his brothers after the death of their father, fitted out ſeveral veſſels, and after providing them with every thing neceſſary for a long voyage, went in queſt of new lands to the weſtward of Ireland; there he diſcovered very fertile countries, and deſtitute of inhabitants; wherefore, landing a part of his people, he returned to Britain, where he made new levies, and afterwards tranſported them to his colony. Laët ſeems to rely much on this ſtory, and concludes from it, that the like enterprizes might poſſibly have been carried into execution from all the Britannic iſlands. It were to be wiſhed, adds he, that ſome perſons had applied themſelves to compare the languages of ſome parts of America with thoſe of Ireland and Wales.

From thence he comes to the Scythians, and draws a parallel of their manners with thoſe of the Scythians; firſt, he proves, by the teſtimony of Pliny, that this name was formerly common to all the nations living in the north of Aſia and Europe; that it was even ſometimes given to the Sarmatians and Germans, although it was afterwards reſtrained to the nations inhabiting the northern extremities of the two continents, where ſeveral of them have been for a long time unknown to the reſt of the world. He pretends, that amongſt thoſe, many were Anthropophagi, that all of them might have ſent colonies into America; and that if it be objected,

ed, that there never were any Anthropophagi, except in South America, it is becauſe all thoſe nations, amongſt whom this deteſtable cuſtom prevailed, paſſed thither. He might, no doubt, have ſaved himſelf the labour of making ſo weak an anſwer to an objection, which no perſon would probably ever have made, ſince ſeveral of the North Americans have ever been, and ſtill are, Anthropophagi: but let us proceed to follow him in the explication of his hypotheſis. I call it hypotheſis, becauſe where memoirs are wanting for eſtabliſhing the truth, he is reduced, like all thoſe who have handled this queſtion, to the neceſſity of having recourſe to probability, and it muſt be eſteemed ſufficient to keep within ſight of it.

Pliny indeed, ſays, that the Scythians valued themſelves for having many horſes; but he does not ſay, that all the Scythians did ſo. Strabo mentions ſeveral nations of them living north of the Caſpian Sea, and part of whom led a wandering life: what he ſays of their manners and way of living, agrees, in a great many circumſtances, with what has been remarked in the Indians of America: now it is no great miracle, adds Laët, that theſe reſemblances are not abſolutely perfect; and thoſe people, even before they left their own country, already differed from each other, and went not by the ſame name: their change of abode effected what remained. We find the ſame likeneſs between ſeveral American nations and the Samoeides, ſettled on the great river Oby, ſuch as the Ruſſians have repreſented them to us; and it is much more natural to ſuppoſe, that colonies of theſe nations paſſed over to America, by croſſing the icy ſea on their ſledges, than to cauſe the Norwegians to travel all the way that Grotius has marked out for them.

them. Beſides that the Americans have much leſs reſemblance to theſe, than to the Samoeides and the Scythian Nomades.

From North, Laët paſſes to South America, and examines whether that continent could have received part of its inhabitants by way of the Pacifick Ocean. The Iſlands of Solomon are ſituated eight hundred leagues from the coaſts of Peru, and we now know them to be ſeparated from Terra Auſtralis by a ſea, the extent of which is not as yet fully aſcertained. Father de Acoſta believes it to be not very diſtant from New Guinea, which he imagines is a continent. But Sir Richard Hawkins, an Engliſhman, pretends to have certainly diſcovered it to be an iſland. We muſt therefore, continues the learned Fleming, ſay that South America has been peopled by way of this great continent of Terra Auſtralis, and the coaſt of which, Don Pedro Hernando Giros, a Portugueſe, and Don Hernando de Quiros, a Spaniard, ranged along for the ſpace of eight hundred leagues in the years 1609 and 1610. The latter, who has given his name to part of this continent, obſerves in his letter to his Catholick Majeſty, that this country, in ſeveral places where he landed, was extremely well peopled, and that too with men of all complexions. But is it not ſtrange, that Laët ſhould rather chuſe to people South America from a country, ſeparated from it by a much greater extent of ocean than the reſt of the world, than from North America, which, on the ſuppoſition that it was firſt peopled, ought naturally to have ſupplied all the New World with inhabitants?

In order to ſupport his aſſertion, that America could not have been peopled by means of the Pacifick Ocean, he obſerves, that eaſterly winds, which conſtantly

conſtantly prevail there, prevent all navigation from the Weſt to the Eaſt; then he examines ſeveral American languages, in order to compare them with one another, which is not the beſt part of his work, at leaſt, if we may form a judgment from the extract he has given us of a vocabulary of the Haron language, in order to compare it with that of Mexico; for he has taken it from brother Gabriel Saghart, a Recollet, who underſtood very little of that tongue.

He does not appear to be better acquainted with the religion of the Indians of Canada, in which he endeavours to diſcover traces which might have led him to their firſt original; and indeed, all this diſplay of learning does not much conduce to the end he has in view: beſides, although no one of his age has made a better connected work, or treated of the Weſt Indies with ſo much accuracy, yet we now meet with ſeveral things in his performance, which ſtand in need of correction.

He concludes, with a ſhort explication of the opinion of Emanuel de Moraez, a Portugueſe, extracted from the twentieth book of his Hiſtory of Brazil; a work, which has not as yet been publiſhed. According to this author, America has been wholly peopled by the Carthaginians and Iſraelites. With regard to the firſt, his proof is, that they had made diſcoveries at a great diſtance from Africa, the progreſs of which being put a ſtop to by the ſenate of Carthage, hence it came to paſs, that thoſe who happened to be then in the newly diſcovered countries, being cut off from all commerce with their countrymen, and deſtitute of many neceſſaries of life, fell ſoon into a ſtate of barbarity. As to the Iſraelites, Moraez pretends, that nothing but circumciſion is wanting, in order to conſtitute a perfect

perfect reſemblance between them and the Braziliians. Even this would be of great importance, were we to conſider the invincible attachment of the former to that ceremony. But there are many other points equally eſſential, wherein the two nations differ. I can ſafely affirm, that this pretended reſemblance, which appears ſo ſtriking to the Portugueſe hiſtorian, is at beſt a falſe ſhow, which ſeizes one at the firſt glance, but diſappears, when looked into more narrowly and without prejudice.

John de Laët having, in a ſatisfactory manner, refuted what opinions had been advanced before his time, but not having been equally ſucceſsful in eſtabliſhing his own, George de Hornn, a learned Dutchman, entered the liſts, which he did with the greater confidence, as he believed he ſhould draw great advantages from the new diſcoveries his countrymen and the Engliſh had lately made in the northern parts of Aſia, Europe, and America.

After relating every thing that has been imagined on the ſubject he undertakes to handle, that is to ſay, all that is found in father Garcia and Solorzano, he ſets in the ſtrongeſt light the difficulty of determining this queſtion; a difficulty occaſioned by the imperfect knowledge we have of the extremities of the globe towards the North and South, and the havock which the Spaniards, the firſt diſcoverers of the New World, made amongſt its moſt ancient monuments; as witneſs the great double road between Quito and Cuzeo; ſuch an undertaking, as the Romans have executed nothing that can be compared to it. However, he is not afraid to promiſe himſelf a happy concluſion to his enquiries, and condemns father Acoſta for too haſtily determining, that no one can engage to ſucceed

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in ſuch an enterprize, without great raſhneſs. Let us now ſee whether he himſelf is not an example of what he finds fault with in the Spaniſh hiſtorian.

He ſets out with declaring, that he does not believe it poſſible America could have been peopled before the flood, conſidering the ſhort ſpace of time which elapſed between the creation of the world and that memorable event. Very able men have, notwithſtanding, believed that there were more men on the face of the earth at that early period, than there are at this preſent; the thing is at leaſt poſſible, and this is ſufficient to prevent the deſtroying the abſolute certainty of the opinion. Nevertheleſs, it muſt be owned, that de Hornn is not ſingle in this opinion; but what he adds, gives us no great notion either of his accuracy or of his probity. According to him, Leſcarbot places Noah's birth in the New World; whereas, this French hiſtorian has ſaid nothing that bears the ſmalleſt reſemblance to ſuch a paradox.

In the next place, he lays it down for a principle, that after the deluge, men and other terreſtrial animals have penetrated into America both by land and by water, and both too out of a formed deſign, and by accident; and that birds have got thither by flight, which does not appear to be improbable, ſeeing that they have been obſerved to follow veſſels without ſtopping, for the ſpace of three hundred leagues together, and ſince there are rocks and iſlands, where they might reſt themſelves, ſcattered about every where in the ocean. Thus, according to him, John de Laët had reaſon to ſay, that the article of birds occaſioned no manner of difficulty. All the world, however, will not be of their opinion; for do not we know many of the fea-

thered ſpecies, which are neither able to fly nor to ſwim ſo far? Father Acoſta has likewiſe very well obſerved, in the opinion of this learned Dutchman, that wild beaſts might have found a free paſſage by land, and that if we do not meet in the New World with horſes or cattle, to which he might have added, elephants, camels, rhinoceros's, and many others; it is becauſe thoſe nations who paſſed thither, either were not acquainted with their uſe, or had no convenience to tranſport them: yet there are cattle in America, but of a ſpecies very different from any of thoſe known in our hemiſphere.

As to what relates to the human ſpecies, de Hornn excludes from America, 1. The Ethiopians, and all the Blacks, both of Africa and Aſia; the few Negroes found in the province of Careta, having, without doubt, been brought there by accident, a ſhort time before. 2. The Norwegians, Danes, Swedes, Celtes, and in a word, all the northern and middle countries of Europe and Aſia. Mean while it may be obſerved, the Celtes and ancient Britons were much addicted to navigation, and as likely as any other people to tranſport themſelves to America. 3. The Samoeides and Laplanders. His reaſon for excluding all theſe nations is this, that there are no Americans who have white curled hair and beards, excepting the *Miges*, in the province of *Zapoteca*, the *Scheries*, on the river of *Plate*, and the *Malopoques* in Brazil. The Eſquimaux have likewiſe white hair; which exceptions embarraſs the queſtion not a little.

All the Indians of Aſia, continues de Hornn, believe the Metempſychoſis: therefore that people could not have paſſed into America, where this doctrine is not ſo much as known. Yet good authors,

thors, and particularly the learned Koempfer, alledge that the doctrine of the Metempſychoſis was firſt carried into India by Xaca, who was probably an Egyptian prieſt, driven from his native country by Cambyſes, when he conquered it. Before him, the religion of fire, and the worſhip of the ſun, were ſpread all over Perſia and the Eaſt Indies, both of which are of great antiquity in a good part of North America. Here follows another argument, which, though ſupported by the authority of Diodorus Siculus, does not appear to me a whit more convincing. The Indians, ſay they, have never ſent colonies abroad; conſequently they could not have contributed to the peopling of the New World. But ſuch general propoſitions are not ſuſceptible of demonſtration, eſpecially with reſpect to ſuch a country as the Indies, poſſeſſed by ſo many nations, differing from one another in manners, cuſtoms, and genius.

The Greeks and the Latins are likewiſe excluded from the New World. They could not, according to our author, ſail beyond Cadiz, becauſe the Carthaginians, who had the command of the Atlantick Ocean, would not have ſuffered them. This argument appears to me very weak, eſpecially with regard to the Greeks, who having founded Cadiz, might very well be able to keep thoſe ſeas in ſpite of the Carthaginians. I ſhould rather imagine, that Hercules being perſuaded that there was nothing beyond that ocean, his countrymen had never thought of embarking upon it, which, however, is a conjecture, that might eaſily be deſtroyed.

In the laſt place, neither Chriſtians, Hebrews, nor Mahometans, if we believe de Hornn, have ever ſettled in the New World; and if this learned man does not abſolutely reject thoſe accounts of

croſſes, baptiſm, circumciſion, confeſſion, faſts, and other religious ceremonies, ſome veſtiges of which have been pretended to have been found in Yucatan and elſewhere, we ſhall ſoon ſee what regard he pays to them in the arrangement of his own ſyſtem, of which here follows the plan.

In the firſt place, he ſuppoſes that America began to be peopled by the North; and regarding the barrier of the Iſthmus of Panama, which Grotius imagines was not open before the time of the Spaniards, as a ſuppoſition void of all foundation, he maintains, that the primitive colonies ſpread themſelves far beyond it, ſince through the whole extent of that continent, and both in the northern and ſouthern parts of it, we meet with undoubted marks of a mixture of the northern nations with thoſe who have come from other places. He believes that the firſt founders of thoſe colonies were the Scythians; that the Phenicians and Carthaginians afterwards got footing in America by way of the Atlantick Ocean, and the Chineſe by way of the Pacifick; and that other nations might, from time to time, have landed there by one or other of theſe ways, or might poſſibly have been thrown on the coaſt by tempeſts; and laſtly, that ſome Jews and Chriſtians might have been carried there by ſome ſuch like event, but at a time when all the New World was already peopled.

He, in my opinion, very well obſerves, that thoſe giants, who may have been ſeen in ſome parts of America, prove nothing; that though in the firſt ages, they might poſſibly have been more frequently met with, yet it cannot be ſaid, they ever compoſed the body of a nation; that as their poſterity did not all inherit their gigantic ſtature, ſo men of

a common ſize might have probably at firſt produced thoſe Coloſſus's, as may be ſeen in the modern accounts of Virginia and Senegal. Hitherto he has advanced nothing new, moſt of theſe obſervations having been made before: afterwards he has ſomething, which is not only new, but which is alſo peculiar to himſelf; he paſſes from probability to certainty, and from conjectures to poſitive aſſertions; and this method once tried, he carries it to a great length; ſo that if we follow him, we ſhall find him ſufficiently entertaining, and at times ſaying very good things.

Omitting the conſideration of the Scythians, whom he ſuppoſes to have entered America by the North, and there to have made the firſt ſettlements, he eſtabliſhes a firſt migration of the Phenicians, by laying it down for a principle, that from the earlieſt times they have been great navigators, and have repleniſhed all our hemiſphere with their colonies: but it is to be obſerved, that under the name of the Phenicians, he likewiſe comprehends the Canaanites. From Strabo he learns, that the Phenicians ſailed into the Atlantick Ocean, and built cities beyond the pillars of Hercules Appian, continues he, and Pauſanias inform us, that the Carthaginians, who were originally Phenicians, covered all the ocean with their fleets; that Hanno made the tour of Africk; and that the Canaries were known to the ancients. We know, from other authorities, that the Phenicians, ſettled in Africa, waged long and bloody wars with the natives of the country, who deſtroyed above three hundred of their cities in Mauritania. Eratoſthenes is his warrant for this, and he prefers the authority of that ancient writer to that of Strabo and Artemidorus, who contradict him. Whither could the Phenicians, adds he, have

retired, after ſo many and great loſſes, but to America ?

This migration being poſſible, he looks upon it of courſe as certain, and to have been very ancient; but he laughs at Opmeer, who had advanced, that the Africans living in the neighbourhood of Mount Atlas, ſailed to America before the deluge. He imagines Plato may poſſibly be miſtaken in ſome things he has ſaid of Atalantis, but that his deſcription is notwithſtanding founded on truth. He obſerves, that all thoſe iſlands to the weſtward of Africa, have been called Atlantides, and he reckons it probable, that the Atalantis of Plato lay in America, and that it was drowned in a deluge, of which there ſtill remain ſome ſlender traditions among the Americans. Further, he ſays, that according to Peter Martyr d'Anglerie, the inhabitants of the Antilles report, that all their iſlands were formerly joined to the continent, and had been ſeparated from it by earthquakes and great inundations: that the veſtiges of a deluge are found in Peru to this day, and that all South America is full of water. He might have added, that the north part of America, or New France, alone contains a greater quantity of water than all the reſt of that vaſt continent beſides.

Diodorus Siculus relates, that the Phenicians ſailed far into the Atlantick Ocean, and that being conſtrained by tempeſtuous weather, they landed upon a large iſland, where they found a fruitful ſoil, navigable rivers, and magnificent edifices. De Hornn takes this to be the ſecond migration of that people to America. Diodorus adds, that in the ſequel the Phenicians being harraſſed by the Carthaginians and the inhabitants of Mauritania, who would

would neither grant them peace nor a truce, ſent colonies to that iſland, but kept the affair ſecret, in order that they might always have a ſecure retreat in caſe of neceſſity. Other authors, whom de Hornn does not mention, have alledged, that theſe voyages were carried on without the knowledge of the government, who, perceiving that the country began to diminiſh in the number of its inhabitants, and having found out the cauſe of this diſorder, prohibited that navigation under very ſevere penalties.

The third and laſt migration of the Phenicians to the New World was occaſioned, according to this author, by a three year's voyage, made by a Tyrian fleet in the ſervice of Solomon. He aſſerts, on the authority of Joſephus, that Eſion Geber, where the embarkation was made, is a port in the Mediterranean. This fleet, he adds, went in queſt of elephants teeth and peacocks to the weſtern coaſt of Africa, which is *Tarſiſh*: this is likewiſe the opinion of Huet: then to *Ophir* for gold, which is *Haïti*, or the iſland Hiſpaniola: Chriſtopher Columbus was of the ſame opinion, according to ſome, as Vetablus certainly was. De Hornn returning afterwards to the Atlantick iſlands, would fain perſuade us, that the Phenicians have, at divers times, ſent colonies thither, and that the *Cerné* of the ancients is Grand Canaria, for which name it is indebted to the Canaanites, who took refuge there.

One of the Canary Iſlands is called *Gomera*: de Hornn makes no doubt that it derives its name from the Amorites, who went to ſettle there after they had been driven out of Paleſtine by the Hebrews. Ought we to be ſurprized, if after this he finds the *Cham* of the Phenicians in the *Chemez* of

the iſland Haïti, in the *Camis* of Japan, and in the *Chile Cambal* of Yucatan? The detail which he afterwards enters into, in order to diſcover traces of of the Phenician religion and manners in the New World, is pretty nearly in the ſame taſte, and carries the ſame conviction along with it. But what ought not to be (he obſerves in this place) paſſed over in ſilence, is that the firſt Phenicians, who ſettled in Africa and the Balearick Iſlands, had neither any letters or characters, nor knew the uſe of them; and that Cadmus, a Phenician, carried into Greece, not the characters which his countrymen afterwards made uſe of, but thoſe which in his time were known among the Egyptians.

All thoſe migrations preceded the Chriſtian æra many ages: here follow ſuch as are of a later date. Our author diſtinguiſhes three ſorts of Scythians, who paſſed into the New World, namely, Huns, Tartars of Cathay, and the Chineſe. Undoubtedly the partizans for the antiquity of the Chineſe nation, will not excuſe his making Scythians the founders of this great empire, neither will thoſe, who reject what is doubtful in the pretenſions of certain Chineſe, be of his opinion; for it is now paſt doubt, that the Chineſe empire cannot be much later than Noah's grand-children. But we ſhould never have done, were we to repeat all the falſe and arbitrary conjectures of this Dutch writer.

Under the name of Huns, he comprehends numberleſs nations, who poſſeſſed an immenſe country; the occaſion of the paſſage of many of them to America, was, according to him, their overgrown numbers, and the inteſtine wars raging amongſt them. He pretends, that the route they made choice of, was by the extremity of the North, where they met with frozen ſeas. Then forgetting

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what he had juſt been ſaying of the infinite numbers of thoſe barbarians, whoſe vaſt countries could no longer contain them; as he had already forgotten what he ſaid at firſt, that the firſt ſettlements in America were compoſed of Scythians, he informs us, that the reaſon why the northern regions of America are ſo thinly inhabited, is, becauſe it was very late before the country of the Huns was peopled at all, and that even at this day, they are far from being populous.

But did they all take the ſame road? No; for while the greateſt number turned off to the right towards the Eaſt, thoſe whom he calls *Finnes*, and the Samoeides and Carolians, whom Tacitus places in Finland, went off to the Eaſt by the weſtward, traverſed Nova Zembla, Lapland and Greenland; whence he reckons that the Norwegians, who had before this time landed in Greenland, and whereof not one was to be found in the year 1348, penetrated into the northern parts of America in queſt of more habitable countries. Nothing can reaſonably hinder us from believing, that the Eſhimaux, and ſome other nations in the neighbourhood of Hudſon's Bay, draw their original from the Norwegians of Greenland, ſuppoſing ſuch ever to have exiſted. What is certain, is, that the Eſhimaux have nothing in common either in their language, manners, or way of living, complexion, or in the colour of their hair with the people of Canada proper, who are their neareſt neighbours.

As to certain animals, ſuch as lions and tigers, which, according to all appearance, have paſſed from Tartary and Hircania into the New World, their paſſage might very well ſerve for a proof, that the two hemiſpheres join to the northward of Aſia; and this

this argument is not the only one we have of this circumſtance, if what I have often heard related by father *Grollon*, a French jeſuit, as undoubted matter of fact may be depended on. This father, ſay they, after having laboured ſome time in the miſſions of New France, paſſed over to thoſe of China. One day as he was travelling in Tartary, he met a Huron woman, whom he had formerly known in Canada: he aſked her, by what adventure ſhe had been carried into a country ſo diſtant from her own? She made anſwer, that having been taken in war, ſhe had been conducted from nation to nation, till ſhe arrived at the place where ſhe then was. I have been aſſured, that another jeſuit paſſing by way of Nantz, in his return from China, had there related much ſuch another affair of a Spaniſh woman of Florida: ſhe had been taken by certain Indians, and given to thoſe of a moſt diſtant country, and by theſe again to another nation, till ſhe had thus been ſucceſſively paſſed from country to country, had travelled regions extremely cold, and at laſt found herſelf in Tartary, and had there married a Tartar, who had paſſed with the conquerors into China, and there ſettled. It is indeed true, that thoſe who have ſailed fartheſt to the eaſtward of Aſia, by purſuing the coaſts of Jeſſo or Kamtſchatka, have pretended to have perceived the extremity of this continent, thence concluding, that between Aſia and America, there could poſſibly be no communication by land; but beſides that, Francis Guella, a Spaniard, if we may believe John Hugh de Linſchooten, hath confirmed, that this ſeparation is no more than a ſtreight, a hundred miles over; the laſt voyages of the Japoneſe give grounds to think that this ſtreight is only a bay, above which there is a paſſage over land.

Let

Let us return to George de Hornn. This writer does not expreſs himſelf with accuracy, when he tells us, that North America is full of lions and tigers. It is true, we find in the country of the Iroquoiſe, a kind of tigers, the hair of which is of a light grey, which are not ſpotted, but which have very long tails, and whoſe fleſh is good eating: but except this, it is not till towards the Tropick that you begin to ſee true tigers and lions, which is, however, no proof that they could not have come from Tartary and Hircania; but as by advancing always ſouthwards, they met with climates more agreeable to their natures, we may believe they have therefore entirely abandoned the northern countries.

What Solinus and Pliny relate, that the Scythian Anthropophagi depopulated a great extent of country as far as the promontory *Tabin*; and what Mark Pol, the Venetian, tells us, that to the north-eaſt of China and Tartary, there are vaſt uninhabited countries, might be ſufficient to confirm our author's conjecture concerning the retreat of a great number of Scythians into America. We find in the ancients the names of ſome of theſe nations: Pliny ſpeaks of the Tabians: Solinus mentions the Apuleans; who, he ſays, had for neighbours the Maſſagetes, and whom Pliny aſſures us to have entirely diſappeared. Ammianus Marcellinus expreſly ſays, that the fear of the Anthropophagi obliged ſeveral of the inhabitants of thoſe countries to take refuge elſewhere. All theſe authorities form, in my opinion, at leaſt a ſtrong conjecture, that more than one nation of America have a Scythian or Tartar original.



Hitherto

Hitherto de Hornn keeps pretty cloſe to his point, and is ſure to return to it from time to time, and we diſcover the man of learning even in his greateſt flights, but on the whole, one would ſay, that by dint of forming conjectures upon the agreement of names, he fails prodigiouſly in point of judgment. Who, for example, would not laugh to hear him ſeriouſly advance, that the Apalaches, a nation of Florida, are the Apaleans of Solinus, and that the Tabians of Ptolomy are the anceſtors of the Tombas of Peru? What follows is ſtill more ridiculous. There is, ſays he, a people, who are neighbours to the Moguls called Huyrons; theſe are the Hurons of Canada. Herodotus calls the Turks Yrcas; theſe are the Iroquoiſe and Souriquois of Arcadia. Unhappily for ſuch rare diſcoveries, this conjecture leads to a falſe concluſion; all, or moſt of the names of the Indians of New France being of French extraction.

Nay more, the Hurons and Iroquoiſe, to whom our author gives ſo very different originals, ſpeak almoſt the ſame language, the one being a dialect of the other; whereas the Souriquois, to whom Hornn gives the ſame anceſtors as to the Iroquoiſe, have abſolutely nothing in common with them either in their language or genius. The language they ſpeak is a dialect of the Algonquin; and the Huron is as different from the Algonquin as the Latin is from the Hebrew. Muſt not one then have his imagination very ſtrongly impreſſed to be able to perſuade himſelf that the *Meyro Humona* of the Braſilians, and the *Paicuma* of the inhabitants of Santa Cruz come from St. Thomas, and are derived from the language of the Turks, who before they paſſed over to America, had ſome knowledge of this Apoſtle?

Our

Our author's uſual confidence deſerts him, when he ſeems to have moſt occaſion for it, and he dares not decide whether South-America has peopled the Terra Auſtralis, or whether that country may have thence received its own inhabitants; but he very ſoon recovers it, and by means of it undertakes to unravel the origin of the empires of Peru and Mexico. He agrees with ſeveral hiſtorians, that theſe monarchies were not very ancient when the Spaniards deſtroyed them, and that their founders had to fight againſt barbarous nations, that had been long ſettled in the country they had made choice of, and chiefly Mexico, where the manners were much more rugged in the time of Cortez, than they were amongſt the Peruvians. This difference probably was owing to this, that the conquerors of Mexico were not ſo much civilized as thoſe of Peru.

Both the one and the other, if we may believe Hornn, are, notwithſtanding, originally from the ſame parts; theſe are, ſays he, the nations of Cathey; the Japoneſe, who are originally deſcended from thence, the Chineſe, whom he always ſuppoſes to be deſcended from the Scythians; ſome Egyptians, and ſome Phenicians, from the time that theſe two empires attained to perfection, in policy, religion, and arts. Here is certainly a very miſcellaneous and capricious original. But in fine, the learned Dutchman will have it, that all theſe nations have ſent colonies into America, and to prove this, it is ſcarce conceivable, where he goes in queſt of Cathayan, Corean, Chineſe, and eſpecially Japoneſe names, in all parts of the New World. Between theſe, there is often much the ſame relation as the *Alfana*, and *Equus* of Menage; but he likewiſe cauſes them to take ſo very long a journey, that

that we ought not to be ſurprized if they undergo very conſiderable changes by the way.

He even goes ſo far as to derive the name of the Chiquites of Paraguay, which is purely of Spaniſh extraction from that of Cathay. The name of Inca, which was that of the imperial family of Peru, has, according to him too great a reſemblance with the ſame name of Cathay, to ſuffer any doubt that theſe ſovereigns derive their original from this great country. In a word, to ſeek for the Cathayans in America, is, according to him, the ſame with ſearching for the Greeks in Italy, and the Phenicians in Africk. The Coreans called their country *Caoli*; therefore, California has been peopled by a Corean Colony. *Chiapa*, a province of Mexico, whence can it come but from *Giapan*, a name which ſome give to the iſland of Japan? Montezuma, emperor of Mexico, had a beard after the Chineſe faſhion; he wants no more to make him come originally from China. It is not, however, without ſome ſcruple, that our author quits his etymologies for the figure of the beard; but this beard is very ſingular in a Mexican. He, moreover, finds that the name of monarch has a great affinity with that of Motuzaïuma, which he pretends on I know not what authority, to be a title of honour in Japan: thus this prince might very well derive his original from theſe iſlands.

However, it is neither the Cathayans, nor the Japoneſe who have founded the Mexican monarchy: De Hornn aſcribes that honour to Facfur, king of China, who being dethron'd by Cublay, great cham of Tartary, fled with a hundred thouſand Chineſe, in a thouſand veſſels into America, and there became the founder of a new empire. Manco, another

ther Chineſe prince, originally of Cathay, had two ages before founded that of Peru. Here are many names, of which the Fathers Couplet, Le Compte, and Du Halde were entirely ignorant. Manco had carried the arts to very great perfection, and it was he who reared thoſe magnificent edifices which ſo much aſtoniſhed the Spaniards. He brought no horſes into America, becauſe, in his time, ſays Mark Pol the Venetian, there were none in China. But it may be aſked, why the Chineſe of Peru have not preſerved their characters? It is, anſwers Hornn, becauſe they were too difficult to write; they found that it was a ſhorter and eaſier way to ſupply the uſe of them by ſymbolical figures.

This is a part of what has been written on the preſent queſtion; and I am much miſtaken if the bare ſetting down of ſo many different opinions is not ſufficient to furniſh the attentive reader with all the lights neceſſary to lead him to the choice of the proper ſide in this great controverſy, which, by endeavouring to explain they have hitherto rendered only more obſcure. It may be reduced as appears to me to the two following articles. 1. How the New World might have been peopled? 2. By whom and by what means it has been peopled.

Nothing it would ſeem may be more eaſily anſwered than the firſt. America might have been peopled, as the three other quarters of the world have been. Many difficulties have been formed upon this ſubject which have been deemed inſolvable, but are far from being ſo. The inhabitants of both hemiſpheres are certainly the deſcendants of the ſame father. This common father of mankind received an expreſs order from heaven to people the whole world, and accordingly it has been peopled.

To

To bring this about, it was neceſſary to overcome all difficulties in the way, and they have alſo been got over. Were thoſe difficulties greater with reſpect to peopling the extremities of Aſia, Africa, and Europe, and the tranſporting men into the iſlands, which lie at a conſiderable diſtance from thoſe Continents, than to paſs over into America? Certainly not. Navigation which has arrived at ſo great perfection within theſe three or four centuries, might poſſibly have been ſtill more perfect in thoſe firſt times than at this day. At leaſt, we cannot doubt, but it was then arrived at ſuch a degree of perfection as was neceſſary for the deſign which God had formed of peopling the whole earth.

Whilſt thoſe authors whom I have cited, have kept to this poſſibility which cannot be denied, they have reaſoned very juſtly; for if it has not been demonſtrated, that there is a paſſage into America over land, either by the north of Aſia and Europe, or by the ſouth, the contrary has not been made appear; beſides, from the coaſt of Africa to Brazil; from the Canaries to the weſtern Iſlands, from the weſtern Iſlands to the Antilles; from the Britannic iſles, and the coaſt of France to Newfoundland, the paſſage is neither long nor difficult: I might ſay as much of that from China to Japan, and from Japan and the Philippines to the *Iſles Mariannes*, and from thence to Mexico. There are iſlands at a conſiderable diſtance from the Continent of Aſia, where we have not been ſurprized to find inhabitants. Why then ſhould we wonder to find people in America? And it cannot be imagined, that the grandſons of Noah, when they were obliged to ſeparate and to ſpread themſelves in conformity to the deſigns of God over the whole earth, ſhould be in

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an abſolute impoſſibility of peopling almoſt one half of the globe?

They ought therefore to have kept to this; but the queſtion was too ſimple and too eaſy to be anſwered. The learned muſt make diſquiſitions, and they imagined they were able to decide how and by whom America has been peopled; and as hiſtory furniſhed no materials for this purpoſe, rather than ſtop ſhort they have realized the moſt frivolous conjectures. The ſimple reſemblance of names, and ſome ſlight appearances, ſeemed, in their eyes, ſo many proofs, and on ſuch ruinous foundations they have erected ſyſtems of which they have become enamoured, the weakneſs of which the moſt ignorant are able to perceive, and which are often overturned by one ſingle fact which is inconteſtable. Hence it happens, that the manner in which the New World has received its firſt inhabitants remaining in very great uncertainty, they have imagined difficulties where none really were, and they have carried this extravagance to ſuch a height, as to believe, that the Americans were not the deſcendants of our firſt parents; as if the ignorance of the manner in which a thing hath happened, ought to make us look upon it as impoſſible, or at leaſt as extremely difficult.

But what is moſt ſingular in this, is, that they ſhould have neglected the only means that remained to come at the truth of what they were in ſearch of; I mean, the comparing the languages. In effect, in the reſearch in queſtion, it appears to me, that the knowledge of the principal languages of America, and the comparing them with thoſe of our Hemiſphere, that are looked upon as primitive, might poſſibly ſet us upon ſome happy diſcovery;

and that way of aſcending to the original of nations, which is the leaſt equivocal, is far from being ſo difficult as might be imagined. We have had, and ſtill have travellers and miſſionaries, who have worked on the languages that are ſpoken in all the provinces of the New World. It would only be neceſſary to make a collection of their grammars and vocabularies, and to collate them with the dead and living languages of the Old World that paſs for originals. Even the different dialects, in ſpite of the alterations they have undergone, ſtill retain enough of the mother-tongue to furniſh conſiderable lights.

Inſtead of this method, which has been neglected, they have made enquiries into the manners, cuſtoms, religion, and traditions of the Americans, in order to diſcover their original. Notwithſtanding, I am perſuaded, that this diſquiſition is only capable of producing a falſe light, more likely to dazzle, and to make us wander from the right path, than to lead us with certainty to the point propoſed. Ancient traditions are effaced from the minds of ſuch as have not, or, who, during ſeveral ages, have been, without any helps to preſerve them; and half the world is exactly in this ſituation. New events, and a new arrangement of things give riſe to new traditions, which efface the former, and are themſelves effaced in their turn. After one or two centuries have paſſed, there no longer remain any marks capable of leading us to find the traces of the firſt traditions.

The manners very ſoon degenerate by means of commerce with foreigners, and by the mixture of ſeveral nations uniting in one body, and by a change of empire always accompanied with a new form of government. How much more reaſon is there to be-

believe ſuch a ſenſible alteration of genius and manners amongſt wandering nations become ſavage, living, without principles, laws, education, or civil government, which might ſerve to bring them back to the antient manners. Cuſtoms are ſtill more eaſily deſtroyed. A new way of living introduces new cuſtoms, and thoſe which have been forſaken are very ſoon forgotten. What ſhall I ſay of the abſolute want of ſuch things as are moſt neceſſary to life? And of which, the neceſſity of doing without, cauſes their names and uſe to periſh together.

Laſtly, nothing has undergone more ſudden, frequent, or more ſurprizing revolutions than religion. When once men have abandoned the only true one, they ſoon loſe it out of their ſight, and find themſelves entangled and bewildered in ſuch a labyrinth of incoherent errors, inconſiſtency and contradiction being the natural inheritance of falſhood, that there remains not the ſmalleſt thread to lead us back to the truth. We have ſeen a very ſenſible example of this in the laſt age. The Buccaneers of St. Domingo, who were chriſtians, but who had no commerce except amongſt themſelves, in leſs than thirty years, and through the ſole want of religious worſhip, inſtruction, and an authority capable of retaining them in their duty, had come to ſuch a paſs, as to have loſt all marks of chriſtianity, except baptiſm alone. Had theſe ſubſiſted only to the third generation, their grandchildren would have been as void of chriſtianity as the inhabitants of Terra Auſtralis, or New-Guinea. They might poſſibly have preſerved ſome ceremonies, the reaſon of which they could not have accounted for, and is it not preciſely in the ſame manner, that ſo many infidel nations are found to have in their idolatrous

worſhip ceremonies which appear to have been copied after ours.

The caſe is not the ſame with reſpect to languages. I allow that a living language is ſubject to continual changes, and as all languages have been ſo, we may ſay with truth, that none of them have preſerved their original purity. But it is no leſs true, that in ſpite of the changes, introduced by cuſtom, they have not loſt every thing by which they are diſtinguiſhed from others, which is ſufficient for our preſent purpoſe; and that from the rivulets, ariſing from the principal ſprings, I mean the dialects, we may aſcend to the mother-tongues themſelves; and that by attending to the obſervation of a learned academician *, that mother-tongues are diſtinguiſhed by being more nervous than thoſe derived from them, becauſe they are formed from nature; that they contain a greater number of words imitating the things whereof they are the ſigns; that they are leſs indebted to chance or hazard, and that that mixture which forms the dialects, always deprives them of ſome of that energy, which the natural connection of their ſound with the things they repreſent always give them.

Hence, I conclude, that if thoſe characteriſtical marks are found in the Americans languages, we cannot reaſonably doubt of their being truly original; and, conſequently, that the people who ſpeak them have paſſed over into that hemiſphere, a ſhort time after the firſt diſperſion of mankind; eſpecially, if they are entirely unknown in our Continent. I have already obſerved, that it is an arbitrary ſuppoſition that the great grandchildren of Noah were

* M. l'Abbé du Bos, *Hiſtory of Painting and Poetry.*

not able to penetrate into the New World, or that they never thought of it. In effect, I ſee no reaſon that can juſtify ſuch a notion. Who can ſeriouſly believe that Noah and his immediate deſcendants knew leſs than we do; that the builder and pilot of the greateſt ſhip that ever was, a ſhip which was formed to traverſe an unbounded ocean, and had ſo many ſhoals and quickſands to guard againſt, ſhould be ignorant of, or ſhould not have communicated to thoſe of his deſcendants who ſurvived him, and by whoſe means he was to execute the order of the great Creator, to people the univerſe, I ſay, who can believe he ſhould not have communicated to them the art of ſailing upon an ocean, which was not only more calm and pacifick, but at the ſame time confined within its ancient limits?

Is it even determined on ſufficient grounds, that America had not inhabitants before the deluge? Is it probable, that Noah and his ſons ſhould have been acquainted with only one half of the world, and does not Moſes inform us, that all, even the remoteſt Continents and iſlands were once peopled? How ſhall we reconcile this with the ſuppoſition of thoſe who maintain, that the firſt men were ignorant of the art of navigation; and can it ſeriouſly be ſaid, contrary to the authority of ſo reſpectable a teſtimony, as John de Laët has done, that navigation is an effect of the temerity of mankind; that it does not enter into the immediate views of the Creator, and that God has left the land to the human ſpecies, and the ocean to fiſhes? Beſides, are not the iſlands a part of the earth, and are there not many places on the Continent, to which it is much more natural to go by ſea, than by long circuits frequently impracticable, or at leaſt ſo very

difficult, as to induce men to undertake almoſt any thing in order to avoid them.

It is certain, that the art of navigation has ſhared the ſame fate with many others, of which we have no proof that our early anceſtors were entirely ignorant, ſome of which are now loſt, and others again preſerved only among a few nations; but what does this prove? We muſt always return to this principle, that the arts neceſſary to the deſigns of God have never been unknown to thoſe whoſe buſineſs it was to put them in execution. Induſtry, has, perhaps, invented ſome which were uſeful only, and luxury diſcovered others which ſerved only to gratify the paſſions. We may alſo believe, that what has cauſed many to fall into oblivion, is their having become no longer neceſſary, and that ſuch has been the making long voyages as ſoon as all the parts of the world were ſupplied with inhabitants. It was ſufficient for the purpoſes of commerce to range along the coaſts, and to paſs over to the neareſt iſlands. Need we then be ſurprized, if men, for want of practice, loſt the ſecret of making long voyages on an element ſo inconſtant, and ſo frequently tempeſtuous.

Who can ever affirm that it was loſt ſo ſoon? Strabo ſays in ſeveral places, that the inhabitants of Cadiz, and all the Spaniards, had large veſſels, and excelled in the art of navigation. Pliny complains, that in his time, navigation was not ſo perfect as it had been for ſeveral ages before; the Carthaginians and Phenicians were long poſſeſſed of the reputation of being hardy and expert mariners. Father Acoſta allows, that Vaſco de Gama found, that the uſe of the compaſs was known among the inhabitants of Mozambique. The iſlanders of Madagaſcar have

a tradition, importing, that the Chineſe had ſent a colony into their country. And is it not a meer begging of the queſtion, to reject that tradition on account of the impoſſibility to ſail ſo far without the help of the compaſs. For if the compaſs is neceſſary for ſailing from China to Madagaſcar, I have as much right to ſay, on the faith of a tradition, univerſal in that great iſland, that the Chineſe have ſailed to Madagaſcar, therefore they had the uſe of the compaſs; as any other perſon has to reaſon in this manner, the Chineſe were unacquainted with the compaſs, therefore they never were at Madagaſcar. However, I do not undertake to ſupport this as matter of fact, which I might ſafely do with very good authors; I only ſay I am as well grounded in advancing, as they are in rejecting it.

The Chineſe, whoſe original reaches up as high as the grandſons of Noah, have anciently had fleets; this is a fact ſufficiently eſtabliſhed in hiſtory: What could have hindered them from paſſing to Mexico by way of the Philippines? The Spaniards perform this voyage every year; from thence by coaſting along ſhore, they might have peopled all America on the ſide of the South-ſea. The *Iſles Mariannes*, and many others, of which diſcoveries are every day made in that extent of ocean, which ſeparates China and Japan from America, might have received their inhabitants in the ſame manner, ſome ſooner and ſome later. The inhabitants of the iſlands of Solomon, thoſe of New-Guinea, new Holland, and Terra Auſtralis, bear too little reſemblance to the Americans, to leave room to imagine they could have ſprung from the ſame original, unleſs we trace it up to the remoteſt ages. Such is their ignorance that we can never know from whence they really draw their deſcent; but in fine, all theſe countries

are peopled; and it is probable, ſome have been ſo by accident. Now if it could have happened in that manner, why might it not have been done at the ſame time, and by the ſame means with the other parts of the globe?

It cannot be denied, that the original of the ancient Celtes and Gauls, ſo renowned for their expertneſs in navigation, and who have ſent ſo many colonies to the extremities of Aſia and Europe, aſcends as high as the children of Japhet; and might not they have penetrated into America by way of the Azores? Should it be objected that theſe iſlands were uninhabited in the fifteenth century, I anſwer, that their firſt diſcoverers, had, undoubtedly, neglected them, in order to ſettle themſelves in larger and more fertile countries, in an immenſe Continent, from which they were at no great diſtance. The Eſkimaux, and ſome other nations of North-America, bear ſo ſtrong a reſemblance to thoſe of the north of Europe and Aſia, and ſo little to the reſt of the inhabitants of the New World, that it is eaſy to perceive they muſt have deſcended from the former, and that their modern original has nothing in common with the latter; I ſay, modern original, for there is not the leaſt appearance of its being ancient; and it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that countries ſo very far from being tempting, have been inhabited much later than others.

The ſame does not hold good with reſpect to the reſt of America, and I can never think that ſo conſiderable a portion of the globe was unknown to, or neglected by the firſt founders of nations; and the argument drawn from the characters of the Americans, and the frightful picture which was at firſt given of them, proves nothing againſt their antiquity.

quity. It is three thouſand years at moſt ſince Europe was full of people as ſavage and as little civilized, as the greateſt part of the Americans; and of theſe there are ſtill ſome remains. Does not Aſia, the firſt ſeat of religion, policy, arts, and ſciences, and the centre of the pureſt and moſt ancient traditions, ſtill behold her moſt flouriſhing empires environed by the groſſeſt barbarity? Egypt which has boaſted of having been the ſource of the fineſt improvements, and which has relapſed into the profoundeſt ignorance; the empire of the Abyſſinians ſo ancient, and heretofore ſo flouriſhing; Lybia, which has produced ſo many great men; Mauritania which has ſent forth ſo many men learned in all ſciences: have not theſe always had in their neighbourhood people who ſeemed to poſſeſs nothing human but the figure? Why then ſhould we be ſurprized that the Americans, ſo long unknown to the reſt of the world, ſhould have become barbarians and ſavages, and that their moſt flouriſhing empires ſhould be found deſtitute of ſo many articles which we reckon indiſpenſably neceſſary in our hemiſphere.

Let us enquire what has rendered the mountaineers of the Pyrenees ſo fierce as many of them are at this day; what is the original of the Laplanders and Samoeides, the Cafres, and Hottentots; why under the ſame parallels of latitude there are blacks in Africa, and not elſewhere; and we ſhall then find an anſwer to the ſame queſtions, reſpecting the Eſkimaux and Algonquins, the Hurons and Sioux, the Guayranis and Patagonians. If it be aſked, why the Americans have no beards, nor hair on their bodies, and why the greateſt part of them are of a reddiſh colour, I ſhall aſk in my turn, why the Africans are moſtly black? This queſtion

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is of no conſequence in the diſpute on the original of the Americans.

Primitive nations have been mixed and divided by various cauſes, foreign and domeſtick wars as ancient as the luſt of dominion, or the paſſion for domineering, the neceſſity of ſeparating and removing to greater diſtances, either becauſe the country was no longer able to contain its inhabitants multiplied to an infinite degree, or becauſe the weaker were obliged to fly before the ſtronger; that reſtleſsneſs and curioſity, ſo natural to mankind, a thouſand other reaſons eaſily to be imagined, and which all enter into the deſigns of Providence; the manner in which thoſe migrations have been made; the difficulty of preſerving arts and traditions amongſt fugitives tranſplanted into uncultivated countries, and out of the way of carrying on any correſpondence with civilized nations: All this I ſay is eaſy to conceive. Unforeſeen accidents, tempeſts, and ſhipwrecks, have certainly contributed to people all the habitable part of the world; and ought we to wonder after this, at perceiving certain reſemblances between the remoteſt nations, and at finding ſuch a difference between nations bordering upon one another.

We may likewiſe further underſtand, that ſome part of theſe wanderers, either forced by neceſſity to unite for mutual defence, or to withdraw from the domination of ſome powerful people, or induced by the eloquence and abilities of a legiſlator, muſt have formed monarchical governments, ſubmitted to laws, and joined together in regular and national ſocieties. Such have been the beginnings of the moſt ancient empires in the Old World; and ſuch might have been the riſe of thoſe of Peru and

Mexico in the New; but we are deſtitute of hiſtorical monuments to carry us any farther, and there is nothing, I repeat it, but the knowledge of the primitive languages which is capable of throwing any light upon theſe clouds of impenetrable darkneſs. It is not a little ſurpriſing, that a method ſo natural and practicable has been hitherto neglected of making diſcoveries as intereſting at leaſt, as the greateſt part of thoſe which for theſe two ages paſt have employed the attention of the learned. We ſhould, at leaſt, be ſatisfied amongſt that prodigious number of various nations inhabiting America, and differing ſo much in language from one another; which are thoſe who ſpeak languages totally and entirely different from thoſe of the Old World, and who, conſequently, muſt be reckoned to have paſſed over to America in the earlieſt ages; and thoſe, who from the analogy of their language, with theſe uſed in the three other parts of the globe, leave room to judge that their migration has been more recent, and ought to be attributed to ſhipwrecks, or to ſome accident ſimilar to thoſe of which I have ſpoken in the courſe of this diſſertation.

HISTORICAL

# HISTORICAL JOURNAL

OF A

# VOYAGE to AMERICA;

Addreſſed to the

DUCHESS OF LESGUIERES.

## LETTER FIRST.

MADAM, *Rochefort, June* 30th, 1720.

YOU were pleaſed to expreſs a deſire I ſhould write you regularly by every opportunity I could find, and I have accordingly given you my promiſe, becauſe I am not capable of refuſing you any thing; but I am greatly afraid you will ſoon grow weary of receiving my letters: for I can hardly perſuade myſelf you will find them near ſo intereſting as you may imagine they ought to be. In a word, you have laid your account with a continued journal; but in the firſt place, I foreſee that the meſſengers, by whoſe hands I muſt tranſmit my letters to you, will never be over and above exact in conveying them, and may poſſibly ſometimes fail in delivering them altogether; in which caſe, you can only have a mutilated and imperfect journal: beſides,

beſides, I am as yet at a loſs where I am to find materials to fill it. For you muſt certainly know, that I am ſent into a country, where I ſhall often be obliged to travel a hundred leagues and upwards, without ſo much as meeting with one human creature, or indeed any thing elſe but one continued proſpect of rivers, lakes, woods, and mountains. And beſides, what ſort of men ſhall I meet with? With ſavages, whoſe language I do not understand, and who are equally unacquainted with mine. Beſides, what can men, who live in the moſt barbarous ignorance, ſay to me, that can affect me; or what can I find to ſay to them, who are full as indifferent and unconcerned as to what paſſes in Europe, and as little affected with it, as you and I Madam are, with what relates to their private concerns.

In the ſecond place, ſhould I make uſe of the priviledge of a traveller, I know you too well to venture upon taking that liberty with you, or to flatter myſelf I ſhould find any credit with you, ſhould I attempt it. You may therefore lay aſide all ſuch apprehenſions in myſelf, for I feel no manner of inclination to forge adventures: I have already had an experimental proof of the truth of what is ſaid by an ancient author, that men carry their own peculiar genius and manners about with them croſs all ſeas, and through all changes of climate, let them go where they will; and I, for my part, hope to preſerve that ſincerity, for which you know me, croſs the vaſt regions of America, and through thoſe ſeas, which ſeparate that New World from ours. You are pleaſed to expreſs ſome concern for my health, which you do not think ſufficiently confirmed to undertake ſo long and fatiguing a voyage; but thank God, I gather ſtrength daily,

and

and I wiſh I could promiſe myſelf with the ſame certainty, or at leaſt probability, every other qualification neceſſary to acquit myſelf, as I ought, of the commiſſion, with which I have been entruſted. But would you believe it, Madam, I thought I ſhould have loſt my life about half way between Paris and Rochefort. Perhaps you ſtill remember what you have often heard me ſay, that our rivers in France were no more than rivulets, compared with thoſe of America: I can aſſure you, the Loire was very near taking a ſevere revenge on me for this outrage and affront done to the dignity of that river.

I had taken boat at Orleans with four or five officers belonging to Conti's regiment of infantry. On the ſixteenth, being over-againſt *Langets*, and being unable to advance any farther, on account of a ſtrong wind blowing directly in our teeth, we wanted to gain that village, to make ſure of good lodgings, in caſe of being obliged to paſs the night there. For this purpoſe, it was neceſſary to croſs the river, which we accordingly propoſed to our boatmen, who ſhowed great reluctance to undertake it; but being young people, and we inſiſting on it, they durſt not contradict us. We had hardly got to the middle of the channel, when we could have wiſhed to have been back again; but it was now too late, and what troubled me moſt of all, it was I who propoſed the advice we ſo heartily repented of. We were really in great danger, which was evident from the countenances of our conductors; however, they were not diſcouraged, and managed ſo well, that they extricated us out of this difficulty.

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The danger being over, one of the company who had frequently been on the point of ſtripping, in order to betake himſelf to ſwimming, took upon him to cry out with all his force, but with a tone which ſhowed there was ſtill a palpitation at his heart, that I had been in a great fright. Perhaps he ſpoke truer than he thought of; all this was, however, nothing but gueſs-work; and eſpecially to ward off the reproaches they were beginning to make me, and in order to perſuade others there was no danger, I had always preſerved a tolerable good countenance. We frequently meet with thoſe falſe bravos, who, to conceal their own apprehenſions, endeavour to make a diverſion by rallying thoſe who have much better courage than themſelves. In the mean time, Madam, were I to believe in omens, here was ſufficient to form a bad augury of a voyage I was going to undertake for above three thouſand leagues by ſea, and to ſail in a canoe of bark on two of the greateſt rivers in the world, and on lakes almoſt as large, and at leaſt full as tempeſtuous as the Pontus Euxinus, or the Caſpian ſea.

The Loire continued to be full as untractable all the reſt of the day, ſo we ſlept at *Largets*; our officers, who had their *Lieutenant de Roy* at their head, were civil men enough, and extremely agreeable company. They were, moreover, very religious, and they gave one proof of it, which was far from being doubtful. There was a kind of adventurer that had joined them at Paris, who was half wit, half *petit Maitre:* as far as Orleans he had kept tolerably within bounds, but the moment we were embarked, he began to break out a little, and by degrees, came to talk on religious matters in a very libertine manner. I had the ſatisfaction to ſee

that

that all our officers were ſo much offended at it, that at Langets none of them would lodge in the ſame houſe with him. A young lieutenant took it upon him to tell him of it, and obliged him to ſeek a lodging elſewhere.

I arrived here the 19th; I was expected as I was charged with packets from the court; but they looked for ſomewhat beſides, that is to ſay, ſome money, which arrived not till to-day. To-morrow I embark on board the Camel, a large and fine frigate belonging to the king, now in the road below the Iſle of Aix, where I ſhall find myſelf in the midſt of my acquaintances. I have already been at ſea with M. de Voutron, who is captain of her, and with Chaviteau the firſt pilot; and I have lived with ſeveral of the officers and paſſengers in Canada. We are told, that we are extremely well-manned, and there is not a ſea-officer who is better acquainted with the voyage we are going to make than our captain. Thus I have nothing to deſire, whether with regard to the ſafety or agreeableneſs of the paſſage.

*I am*, &c.

# LETTER II.

*Voyage from* Rochelle *to* Quebec; *ſome Remarks on that paſſage, on the great Bank of* Newfoundland, *and on the River* St. Lawrence.

*Quebec*, Sept. 24, 1720.

*Madam*,

YEſterday I arrived in this city, after a tedious and troubleſome paſſage of eleven weeks and ſix days; we had, however, only a thouſand leagues to ſail; thus you ſee that at ſea we do not always travel as M. l'Abbé de Choiſy uſed to ſay *per la via delle poſte*. I have kept no journal of this voyage, as I ſuffered greatly from the ſea-ſickneſs which laſted with me for more than a month. I had flattered myſelf with being quit this time, having already paid tribute twice before; but there are conſtitutions which are abſolutely incapable of enduring that element, of which ſort mine is one. Now in the condition, to which we are reduced by this indiſpoſition, it is abſolutely impoſſible to give any attention to what paſſes in the ſhip. And beſides, nothing can be more barren than ſuch a navigation as this; for we are generally taken up with enquiring how the wind blows, at what rate we advance, and whether it be in the right courſe; and during two thirds of the way you ſee nothing but

the ſeas and ſkies. I am going, however, to give you what my memory can furniſh moſt likely to contribute to your amuſement for a quarter of an hour, in order to acquit myſelf as much as is poſſible of the promiſe I made you.

We continued in the road the firſt of July the whole day, and the ſecond we ſet ſail by the favour of a gentle breeze at north-eaſt. The three firſt days the wind continued favourable, though in very light breezes, which, from the calmneſs of the ſea, were ſufficiently acceptable. It ſeemed as if it wanted to lull us aſleep before it ſhowed itſelf in all its fury. The fourth or fifth, the wind changed, ſo that we were obliged to lie cloſe-haul'd *. The ſea grew high, and for near ſix weeks we were much toſſed. The winds ſhifted continually, but were much oftener againſt us than favourable, ſo that we were obliged almoſt continually to ply to windward.

On the ninth of Auguſt our pilots believed themſelves on the great bank of Newfoundland, and they were not much miſtaken; they were even in the right in reckoning ſo, it being the buſineſs of a good navigator to be always ſomewhat a-head of his ſhip; that is to ſay, to ſuppoſe himſelf farther advanced than he really is; but from the 9th to the 16th, we ſcarce made any way at all. What is called the great bank of Newfoundland, is properly a mountain, hid under water, about ſix hundred French leagues from the weſtern ſide of that kingdom. The Sieur Denys, who has given the world an excellent work on North-America, and a very inſtructive treatiſe, gives this mountain an hundred and fifty leagues in extent, from north to ſouth;

* *To lie cloſe-haul'd*, that is, to ſail almoſt directly againſt the wind, or as nearly as poſſible.

but

but, according to the moſt exact ſea-charts, the beginning of it on the ſouth-ſide is in 41 deg. north lat. and its northern extremity is in 49 deg. 25 min.

It is indeed true, that both its extremities are ſo narrow, that it is very difficult to fix its boundaries with any exactneſs. Its greateſt breadth from eaſt to weſt is about 90 ſea leagues of England and France, between 40 and 49 deg. of long. weſt from the meridian of Paris. I have heard ſailors ſay, that they have anchored upon it in five fathom water; which is likewiſe contrary to what the Sieur Denys advances, who pretends he never found leſs than five and twenty. But it is certain, that in ſeveral places there is upwards of ſixty. Towards the middle, on the ſide next Europe, it forms a bay called *La Foſſe*, or the ditch; and this is the reaſon, why of two ſhips under the ſame meridian, and within ſight of one another, the one ſhall find ground, and the other no ſoundings at all.

Before you arrive at the great bank, you find a leſſer one called the *Banc Jacquet*, ſituated oppoſite to the middle of the great one. Some mention a third bank before this, to which they give a conical figure; but I have ſeen pilots who make no more than one of all the three, and anſwer ſuch objections as are made to them, by aſſerting, that there are cavities in the great bank, and of ſuch a depth as to deceive thoſe who are led into the falſe ſuppoſition of three different banks, by not happening to run out a ſufficient length of cable when they caſt anchor. However, let the ſize and ſhape of this mountain be as they will, ſince it is impoſſible to aſcertain them to any degree of exactneſs; you find on it a prodigious quantity of ſhell-fiſh, with ſeveral ſorts of other fiſhes of all ſizes, moſt part

of which ſerve for the common nouriſhment of the cod, the number of which ſeems to equal that of the grains of ſand which cover this bank. For more than two centuries ſince, there have been loaded with them from two to three hundred ſhips annually, notwithſtanding the diminution is not perceivable. It might not, however, be amiſs, to diſcontinue this fiſhery from time to time, and the more ſo, as the gulph of St. Lawrence, and even the river, for more than ſixty leagues, the coaſts of Acadia, thoſe of the *Iſle Royale*, or Cape Breton, and of Newfoundland, are no leſs repleniſhed with this fiſh, than the great bank. Theſe, Madam, are true mines, which are more valuable, and require much leſs expence than thoſe of Peru and Mexico.

We ſuffered a great deal during the whole time that the contrary winds detained us on the frontiers of the empire of the cod-fiſh; this being by much the moſt diſagreeable and inconvenient place in all the ocean to ſail in. The ſun ſcarce ever ſhows himſelf here, and for moſt part of the time the air is impregnated with a cold thick fog, which indicates your approach to the bank, ſo as to render it impoſſible to be miſtaken. Now what can poſſibly be the cauſe of ſo conſtant and remarkable a phenomenon! Can it be the neighbourhood of the land and of thoſe foreſts with which it is covered? But beſides, that Cape Race, which is the neareſt land to the great bank is thirty-five leagues diſtant, the ſame thing happens not on any other coaſt of the iſland; and further the iſland of Newfoundland is not ſubject to fogs, except on the ſide towards the great bank; every where elſe its coaſts enjoy a pure air and a ſerene ſky. It is, therefore probable, that the cauſe of the miſts, in which Cape Race is ge-

nerally hid, is the proximity of the great bank, and muſt be ſought for on the bank itſelf. Now this is my conjecture on this head, which I ſubmit to the judgment of the learned. I begin with obſerving, that we have another ſign by which we diſcover our near approach to the great bank; and it is this, that on all its extremities commonly called its *Ecorres*, there is always a ſhort tumbling ſea with violent winds. May we not look upon this as the cauſe of the miſts which prevail here, and ſay, that the agitation of the water on a bottom, which is a mixture of ſand and mud, renders the air thick and heavy, and that the ſun can only attract thoſe groſs vapours which he is never able ſufficiently to rarify? You will aſk me, whence this agitation of the ſea on the moſt elevated parts of the great bank proceeds, whilſt every where elſe and even on the bank itſelf there is a profound calm? If I am not deceived it is this. We daily find in theſe places currents, which ſet ſometimes one way and ſometimes another, the ſea being impreſſed with an irregular motion by thoſe currents, and beating with impetuoſity againſt the ſides of the bank, which are almoſt every where very ſteep, is repelled from it with the ſame violence, and is the true cauſe of the agitation remarked on it.

If the ſame thing happens not in approaching all ſteep coaſts, it is owing to their not being of equal extent with this; that there are no currents near them, that they are leſs ſtrong, or that they do not run counter to each other, that they do not meet with ſo ſteep a coaſt, and are not repelled from it with equal violence. It is beſides certain, as I have already obſerved, after thoſe who follow the ſea-faring life, that the agitation of the ſea, and the mud which it ſtirs up, contribute much to thicken

the air, and encreaſe the winds: But that thoſe winds when they proceed from no other cauſe do not extend very far, and that upon the great bank, at any conſiderable diſtance from the ſide of it, you ſail with as much tranquillity as in a road, excepting in the caſe of a violent wind proceeding from ſome other quarter.

It was on a Friday the 16th of Auguſt, we found ourſelves on the great bank in 75 fathom water. To arrive at the great bank is called *Bancquer* or *Banking*; to depart from it is called *Debanquer* or *Debanking*, two expreſſions with which the cod-fiſhery has enriched our language. It is the cuſtom on finding ſoundings to cry out, *Vive le Roy*, which is generally done with great chearfulneſs. Our crew were longing for freſh cod; but the ſun was ſet, and the wind favourable, ſo we thought proper to take the advantage of it. Towards eleven o'clock at night aroſe a ſtrong wind at ſouth-eaſt, which, with our mizen only, would have carried us three leagues an hour. Had we had this inconvenience alone by furling as we did that inſtant all our other ſails, we ſhould have had no reaſon to complain, but there came on at the ſame time ſuch a plump of rain, that you would have thought all the cataracts of the heavens had been opened. What was ſtill worſe, the thunder began at the time when it commonly ends, it fell ſo near us, that the rudder was wounded, and all the ſailors that worked the ſhip felt the ſhock of it. Then it grew louder, and a hundred pieces of cannon could not have made a greater noiſe. We could not hear one another, and ſo thick were the peals, as to ſeem one continued roar. Nor could we ſee any thing in the midſt of the lightning, ſo much were we dazzled with it. In a word, for an hour

and

and an half, our deſtruction ſeemed inevitable; the hearts of the braveſt amongſt us miſgave them; for the thunder continued always directly over our heads, and had it ſtruck us a ſecond time we might have become food for the cod, at whoſe expence we had reckoned very ſoon to make good cheer. Caſtor or Pollux, for I know not which of the two was then upon duty, had forwarned us under the name of *Feu de St. Elme* *, of all this *Fracas*, otherwiſe we might poſſibly have been ſurprized and overſet.

An hour and a half afterwards the rain ceaſed, the thunder ſeemed at a diſtance, and the flaſhes of lightning were only ſeen faintly on the horizon. The wind continued ſtill favourable and without bluſtering, and the ſea became ſmooth as glaſs. Every one was then for going to bed, but the beds were all wet, the rain having penetrated through the moſt imperceptible chinks, a circumſtance which is inevitable when a ſhip is much toſſed. They, however did the beſt they could, and thought themſelves extremely happy to be ſo eaſily quit. Every thing violent is of ſhort duration, and above all a ſouth-eaſt wind at leaſt in theſe ſeas. It never continues but when it grows ſtronger by degrees, and often ends in a ſtorm. The calm returned with day-light, we made no progreſs, but diverted ourſelves with fiſhing.

Every thing is good in the cod, whilſt it is freſh; and it loſes nothing of its good reliſh, and becomes even firmer after it has been kept two days in ſalt; but it is the fiſhers only who taſte the moſt delici-

* Theſe fires never miſs to be obſerved on the yards at the approach of a ſtorm.

ous

ous parts of this fiſh, that is to ſay, the head, the tongue, and the liver, which, after having been ſteeped in oil and vinegar, with a little pepper, make a moſt exquiſite ſauce. Now, in order to preſerve all theſe parts would require too much ſalt; ſo that whatever they cannot conſume whilſt the fiſhing ſeaſon laſts, is thrown into the ſea. The largeſt cod I have ever ſeen was not quite three feet in length; notwithſtanding thoſe of the great bank are the largeſt: but, there is, perhaps, no animal which has ſo wide a throat in proportion to its ſize, or that is more voracious. All ſorts of things are found in the belly of this fiſh, even pieces of broken earthen ware, iron, and glaſs. It was at firſt believed capable of digeſting all this, but the world has become ſenſible of this miſtake, which was founded on this circumſtance, that ſome pieces of iron half worn away, had been found in the belly of it. It is the received opinion at this day that the *Gau*, which is the name that the fiſhers have given to the ſtomach of the cod-fiſh, turns inſide out, like a pocket, and that by means of this action, this fiſh diſburdens itſelf of whatever incommodes it.

What is called in Holland the *Cabelao*, is a ſort of cod which is caught in the channel and ſome other places, and which differs from the cod of America only in that it is of a much ſmaller ſize. That of the great Bank is ſalted only, and this is what is called *White*, or more commonly *Green Cod*. M. Denys tells us on this head, that he has ſeen ſalt made in Canada equal to what is carried thither from Brouage in Old France, but that after they had made the experiment, the ſalt-pits, which had been dug on purpoſe, were filled up. Thoſe who have the moſt exclaimed againſt this country, as being utterly

good

good for nothing, have been the very perſons who have been more than once the cauſe why no advantage has been reaped from it. Dried cod, or what is called *la Merluche*, can only be taken on the coaſts; which requires great attendance and much experience. M. Denys, who agrees that all thoſe he had ever known to follow this commerce in Acadia ruined themſelves by it, fully proves, and makes it extremely plain, that they are in the wrong who conclude from thence that the cod is not in great abundance in thoſe parts. But he aſſerts, that in order to carry on this fiſhery there to advantage, the fiſhers muſt be perſons reſiding in the country; and he reaſons in this manner. Every ſeaſon is not equally proper for this fiſhery; it can only be carried on from the beginning of the month of May, till the end of Auguſt. Now if you bring ſailors from France, either you muſt pay them for the whole year, in which caſe your expences will ſwallow up the profits, or you muſt pay them for the fiſhing ſeaſon only, in which they can never find their account. For to ſay that they may be employed for the reſt of the year in ſawing of boards and felling of timber, is certainly a miſtake, as they could not poſſibly make the expence of their living out of it; ſo that thus either they muſt needs ruin the undertaker or die of hunger.

But if they are inhabitants of the place, the undertakers will not only be better ſerved, but alſo it will be their own faults if they do not preſently get a fortune. By this means they will be able to make choice of the beſt hands; they will take their own time to begin the fiſhery, they will make choice of proper places, they will make great profits for the ſpace of four months; and the reſt of the year they may employ in working for themſelves at home.

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Had things been ſettled upon this bottom in thoſe parts for a hundred and fifty years laſt paſt, Acadia muſt have become one of the moſt powerful colonies in all America. For whilſt it was given out in France, and that with a kind of affectation that it was impoſſible ever to do any thing in that country, it enriched the people of New-England by the fiſhing trade only, though the Engliſh were without ſeveral advantages for carrying it on, which our ſituation offered us.

After leaving the great bank, you meet with ſeveral leſſer ones, all of them equally abounding in fiſh, nor is the cod the only ſpecies found in thoſe ſeas. And though you do not in fact meet with many *Requiems*, ſcarce any *Giltheads* and Bonettas, or thoſe other fiſhes which require warmer ſeas, yet to make amends they abound with whales, blowers, ſword-fiſh, porpuſſes, threſhers, with many others of leſs value. We had here more than once the pleaſure of viewing the combat of the whale and ſword-fiſh, than which nothing can be more entertaining. The ſword-fiſh is of the thickneſs of a cow, from ſeven to eight feet long, the body tapering towards the tail. It derives its name from its weapon, which is a kind of ſword three feet in length and four fingers in breadth. It proceeds from his ſnout, and from each ſide he has a range of teeth an inch long, and placed at equal diſtances from each other. This fiſh is dreſſed with any ſort of ſauce, and is excellent eating. His head is more delicious than a calf's, and thicker, and of a ſquarer form. His eyes are extremely large. The whale and ſword-fiſh never meet without a battle, and the latter has the fame of being the conſtant aggreſſor. Sometimes two ſword-fiſhes join againſt one whale, in which caſe the parties are by no means

means equal. The whale, in lieu of arms offenſive and defenſive, has only his tail; in order to uſe it againſt his enemy he dives with his head, and if the blow takes place finiſhes him at a ſtroke; but the other, who is very adroit in ſhunning it, immediately falls upon the whale, and buries his weapon in his ſides. And as he ſeldom pierces quite to the bottom of the fat, does him no great damage; when the whale diſcovers the other darting upon him he dives, but the ſword-fiſh purſues him under water, and obliges him to riſe again to the ſurface; then the battle begins anew, and laſts till the ſword-fiſh loſes ſight of the whale, who makes a flying fight of it, and is a better ſwimmer than he on the ſurface of the water.

The *Flettau*, or threſher, reſembles a large plaice, and what is called by the French fiſhermen *flet*, appears to be the diminutive of this fiſh. He is grey on the back and white under the belly. His length is generally from four to five feet, his breadth at leaſt two, and his thickneſs one. His head is very thick, all of it exquiſite and extremely tender; from the bones is extracted a juice which is preferable to the fineſt marrow. His eyes which are almoſt as large as thoſe of the ſwordfiſh, and the gills are moſt delicious morſels. The body is thrown into the ſea, to fatten the cod, to whom the threſher is the moſt dangerous enemy, and who makes but one meal of three of thoſe fiſhes. I ſhall not trouble your Grace with a deſcription of all the ſpecies of birds which live on thoſe ſeas, and that only by fiſhing, all of them being naturally fiſhers, as ſeveral travellers have already mentioned them, though their accounts contain nothing worth notice.

On the 18th, the wind favourable; we believe the winds have carried us a little too far to the ſouthward, and we are ſailing weſt-north-weſt, in order to recover our latitude. For ten or twelve days paſt we have never ſeen the ſun, and on that account have not been able to take an obſervation. This happens pretty often, and is what occaſions the greateſt danger of this navigation. Towards eight o'clock in the morning, we perceive a ſmall veſſel, which ſeems to make towards us, we ſtand towards her, and when we are come near enough, aſked her, in what latitude we are? This was an Engliſhman, the captain of which anſwered in his own language; we imagined, he ſaid, we were in 45 deg. We had, however, no reaſon to rely too much upon his account, as he might poſſibly be in the ſame miſtake with ourſelves. We take heart notwithſtanding, and as the wind continues favourable, we flatter ourſelves if it ſtands, with the hopes of paſſing the gulph in two days.

Towards four o'clock in the evening the wind fell, which amazed us all; this was, notwithſtanding, what preſerved us. At 11 o'clock at night, the horizon appeared very black a-head of us, tho' every where elſe the heavens were extremely ſerene. The ſailors of the watch did not heſitate to ſay, that it was the land we ſaw, the officer of the watch laughed at them, but on ſeeing that they perſiſted in their opinion, he began to think they might poſſibly be in the right. Luckily for us, there was ſo little wind, that it was with difficulty the ſhip would ſteer; ſo that he hoped day-light would appear before we approached too near the land. At midnight the watch was changed; the ſailors, who ſucceeded thoſe on the former watch, were immediately of their opinion; but their officer undertook to prove

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to them that what they ſaw could not poſſibly be the land, but was a fog which would vaniſh as daylight came on. He was not able to perſuade them of it, and they perſiſted in maintaining that the heavens were too ſerene for any miſt to be on the oppoſite ſide, except the land lay that way likewiſe.

At day-break, they all fell a crying out that they ſaw the land. The officer, without even deigning to look that way, ſhrugged up his ſhoulders, and at four o'clock went to ſleep, aſſuring them, that when he ſhould awake he ſhould find this pretended land vaniſhed. His ſucceſſor who was the Count de Vaudreuil, being more cautious, immediately ordered ſome of the ſails to be furled, and was not long before he ſaw the neceſſity of this precaution. As ſoon as day appeared, we diſcovered the horizon all ſet round with land, and at the ſame time a ſmall Engliſh veſſel at anchor within two cannon ſhot of us. M. de Voutron being informed of it cauſed the incredulous officer to be called up that inſtant, whom they had much to do to get out of his cabbin, where he maintained that it was impoſſible we could have land ſo near us. He came, however, after two or three ſummonſes, and at ſight of the danger to which his obſtinacy had expoſed us, he was ſeized with aſtoniſhment.. He is, notwithſtanding the moſt expert man in France for navigating on theſe ſeas, but too great a ſhare of abilities is ſometimes of prejudice when we place too much confidence in them.

Notwithſtanding, Madam, if the wind had not fallen at four o'clock in the evening before, we had certainly gone to the bottom in the night; for we were running full ſail upon breakers, from whence

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it was impoſſible we could ever be got off. The difficulty was to know where we were. We were, however, certain that we were not in 45 deg. the evening before. The queſtion was, were we more to the north or ſouth? And on this there were different opinions. One of our officers aſſured us, that the land which appeared before us was Acadia; that he had formerly made a voyage thither, and that he knew it again; another maintained that it was the iſlands of St. Peter. But what reaſon is there to think, ſaid others to him, we are ſo far advanced? It is not yet twenty-four hours ſince we were upon the great bank, and it is more than an hundred leagues from the great bank, to the iſlands of St. Peter. The pilot Chaviteau pretended, that it was Cape Race. That there is ſome error in our reckoning, ſaid he, there is not the leaſt doubt, and we ought not to wonder at it, it being impoſſible to keep an exact account in the way of currents which we are not acquainted with, and which are continually changing, and eſpecially as we had not the benefit of taking the latitude to ſet us to rights. But it is paſt the bounds of all probability that we ſhould either be on the coaſt of Acadia, or at the iſlands of St. Peter *.

His reaſoning appeared juſt to us, we could, however, have wiſhed he had been miſtaken, for we knew how diſagreeable a thing it was to be en-

* In 1725, the ſame Chaviteau committed a blunder much more fatal. He was then likewiſe king's pilot on board the *Camel*, and having been ſeveral days without taking the latitude in the night of the 25th of Auguſt, this ſhip ſtruck upon a rock near Louiſburgh in the iſland of Cape-Breton, and every ſoul on board periſhed. It appeared by the journals that had been kept on board, and which were found afterwards, that they believed themſelves ſtill ſeventy leagues from that iſland.

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tangled with the land under Cape Race. In this uncertainty we reſolved to conſult the captain of the Engliſhman that lay a-head of us, and Chaviteau was charged with this commiſſion. He reflected at his return, that the Engliſh had been as much ſurprized at finding themſelves in this bay as we were, but with this difference, that this was the place whither their buſineſs led them; that Cape Race was before us, and Cape du Brole ten leagues below; that from the midſt of thoſe breakers, on which we had like to have been caſt away, there iſſued a river, at the entry of which there was an Engliſh ſettlement, whither this ſmall veſſel was bound with proviſions.

About fifteen years ago, there happened to us a very ſingular adventure in this very paſſage, and which expoſed us to, perhaps, as great danger as that which I have been relating. This was a few days after the 15th of Auguſt, and till then we had been much incommoded with exceſſive heats. One morning, as we were getting up we were ſeized with ſo intenſe a cold as to be obliged to have recourſe to our winter garments. We could, by no means imagine the cauſe of this, as the weather was extremely fine, and as the wind did not blow from the north. At laſt, on the third day thereafter, at four o'clock in the morning, one of the ſailors cried out with all his might, Luff, luff, that is, place the helm ſo as to bring the ſhip nearer to the wind. He was obeyed, and the moment thereafter, we perceived an enormous piece of ice which glanced along the ſide of the veſſel, and againſt which ſhe muſt infallibly have been ſtove to pieces, if the ſailor had not been endued with mariner's eyes, for we could ſcarce ſee it, and if the man at the helm had been leſs alert in ſhifting the tiller.

I did not, however, ſee this piece of ice, as I was not then got up; but all who were then upon deck, aſſured us, that it ſeemed as high as the towers of *Notre Dame* at Paris, and that it was a great deal higher than the maſts of the ſhip. I have often heard it maintained that this was impoſſible, becauſe, beſides its extraordinary height above the ſea, it muſt alſo reach to a conſiderable depth under water, and that it was not poſſible in the nature of things, that ſuch a piece of ice could be formed. To this I anſwer, in the firſt place, that in order to deny the fact, we muſt give the lie to a number of perſons, for it is not the firſt time that ſuch floating iſlands have been ſeen at ſea. The Mother of the Incarnation being upon the ſame paſſage, run the ſame hazard in broad day-light. The piece of ice which for want of wind to carry her out of its way, had like to have ſent her to the bottom, was ſeen by the whole crew, and was reckoned much larger than that which we met with. She adds, that the general abſolution was given as is uſual in caſes of extreme danger.

It is moreover certain, that in Hudſon's bay there are pieces of ice formed by the fall of torrents, which tumble from the top of mountains, and which breaking off in the ſummer with a hideous noiſe, are afterwards carried different ways by the current. The Sieur Jeremie, who paſſed ſeveral years in this bay, tells us, that he had the curioſity to cauſe ſound cloſe to one of theſe pieces of ice which had been ſtranded, and that after running out a hundred fathom of line, they found no bottom. I return to our adventure. Cape Race, Madam, is the ſouth-eaſt point of the iſland of Newfoundland; it is ſituated in 46 deg. and about 30 min. north latitude. The coaſt runs from hence weſtward,

ward, a little inclining to the north for the ſpace of a hundred leagues, and terminates at Cape Ray in 47 deg. Almoſt half-way, is the great bay of Placentia, one of the fineſt ports in all America. Weſt-ſouth-weſt from this is a Hummock, which is ſeen from far, and ſerves to make it known. This is called the *Red Hat*, from its appearing in this form at a diſtance, and from its being of a reddiſh colour. On the 23d at noon, we were abreaſt of it, and in the evening we ſailed along the iſlands of St. Peter, which lay on the ſtarboard ſide, that is to ſay on our right-hand.

Theſe are three iſlands, the two firſt of which are exceeding high, and from the ſide on which we were, could be ſeen nothing but mountains covered with moſs. It is pretended that this moſs in ſome places covers very fine porphyry. On the ſide towards Newfoundland, there is ſome arable land, with an indifferent good port, where we formerly had ſome ſettlements. The largeſt and moſt weſtern of the three, which is more commonly called Maguelon iſland, is not ſo high as the two others, and the land of it appears to be very level. It is about three quarters of a league in length. On the 24th, at day-break, we had left it only five or ſix leagues behind us, but after midnight we had had no wind. Towards five o'clock in the morning, there aroſe a light breeze at ſouth-eaſt. Whilſt we were waiting till it ſhould grow ſtrong enough to fill our ſails, we diverted ourſelves with fiſhing, and caught a conſiderable quantity of cod. We ſpent two hours more than we ought to have done in this diverſion, and we had very ſoon ſufficient reaſon to repent it.

It was eight o'clock when we made ſail, and we run the whole night in hopes of diſcovering Cape Ray which lay upon our right, or the little iſland of St. Paul, which we ought to leave on our left, and which is almoſt oppoſite to Cape Ray, but night came on without our having had ſight of either. We would then have been very glad that we had made uſe of the time we had loſt. What was moſt diſagreeable in this, was, that towards midnight we were overtaken by a ſtorm, much ſuch another as that which we had met with on the great bank, and as we had no room to doubt of our being near one or other of the two lands between which our courſe lay, we durſt not take the benefit of the wind which would have advanced us a good deal in our courſe. Thus, in ſpite of Chaviteau's advice, who undertook to carry us thorough in ſafety, we lay too. At day-break we perceived Cape Ray, on which the currents were driving us, and to compleat our misfortune, we had not wind enough to get clear of the coaſt. We were almoſt aſhore, when about half an hour paſt five in the morning, a light breath of wind at north-weſt came in the nick of time to our aſſiſtance; we loſt nothing by it, and we were extricated from the danger in which we were. The north-weſt, after doing us this good office, would have obliged us extremely had it made way for ſome other wind; it did not, however, comply with our wiſhes, and for two whole days detained us in the mouth of the gulph of St. Laurence. On the third day we paſſed between the iſland of St. Paul and Cape St. Laurence, which is the moſt northerly point of the *Iſle Royale*, or iſland of Cape Breton. This paſſage is very narrow, and is never ventured upon in foggy weather, becauſe the iſland of St. Paul is ſo ſmall as to be eaſily hid by the miſt. That which lies between this iſland and Cape Ray

is much broader; but our ſails were ſet to take the other when the wind ſhifted; accordingly we took advantage of it. The gulph of St. Laurence is fourſcore leagues in length, which a good wind at ſouth-eaſt, with the aſſiſtance of the currents, carried us through in twenty-four hours. About halfway you meet the *Iſles aux Oiſeaux*, or Bird Iſlands, which we ſailed along at the diſtance of a ſmall cannon ſhot, and which muſt not be confounded with thoſe which were diſcovered by *James Cartier*, near the Iſland of Newfoundland. Theſe of which we are now ſpeaking, are two rocks which appeared to me to riſe up tapering to a ſharp point about ſixty feet above the ſurface of the water, the largeſt of which was between two and three hundred feet in circumference. They are very near one another, and I do not believe there is water enough between them for a large ſhallop. It is hard to ſay what colour they are of, the mute, or dung of ſea-fowl, covering entirely both the ſurface and banks. There are to be ſeen, however, in ſome places veins of a reddiſh colour.

They have been viſited ſeveral times; and whole ſhalops have been loaded with eggs of all ſorts, and the ſtench is affirmed to be utterly inſupportable. And ſome add, that beſides the ſea-gulls and the cormorants, which come thither from all the neighbouring lands, there are found a number of other fowl that cannot fly. What is wonderful, is, that in ſo prodigious a multitude of neſts every one finds his own. We fired one cannon-ſhot, which ſpread the alarm over all this feathered commonwealth, when there aroſe over the two iſlands a thick cloud of thoſe fowl of at leaſt two or three leagues in circuit. On the morrow, about daybreak the wind fell all at once: Two hours after that we doubled Cape Roſe, and entered the river St.

Laurence, which runs north-eaſt and ſouth-weſt; and the northweſt wind, which immediately roſe, would have ſerved us well enough, but as we had loſt two hours on the twenty-fourth in fiſhing, and in conſequence thereof, two whole days at the entry of the gulph, we were obliged to wait here till the north-weſt ſhould fall, that is to ſay, five days, in which we did not make five leagues. This delay was not even the greateſt miſchief which it occaſioned us; it was beſides very cold, and there was a great ſwell which toſſed us exceedingly, and when the gale was about to fall it was very near being the cauſe of our deſtruction in the manner you are preſently going to ſee. But I muſt firſt give you a map of the country where we were. Cape Roſe is properly the mouth of the river St. Laurence, and it is here we muſt meaſure its breadth at its opening, which is about thirty leagues. Somewhat below this, and more to the ſouthward, are the bay and point of Gaſpey or Gachepé. Thoſe who pretend that the river St. Laurence is forty leagues over at its mouth, probably meaſure it from the eaſtern point of Gaſpey. Below the bay you perceive a ſort of iſland, which is in fact, no more than a ſteep rock, of about thirty fathoms in length, ten high, and four broad. One would take it for a fragment of an old wall, and it has been aſſerted that it formerly joined *Mont Joli*, which ſtands over-againſt it on the Continent. This rock has in the middle an opening in the form of an arch, through which a Biſcayan ſhalop might paſs under ſail, and hence it has got the name of *Iſle Perceé*, or the bored Iſland. Navigators know that they are near it when they diſcover a flat mountain, riſing above ſeveral others, called *Roland's Table*. The iſland Bonaventure is a league from Bored Iſland, and almoſt at the ſame diſtance lies the iſland *Miſcon*, eight

leagues

leagues in circuit, which has an excellent harbour. In the offing, at a ſmall diſtance from this iſland, is a ſpring of freſh water, which boils up and jets to a conſiderable height.

All theſe parts are excellent for the fiſhery, and there is every where exceeding good anchoring ground. It would even be eaſy to erect magazines or warehouſes, which would ſerve by way of ſtore-houſes, or repoſitories for Quebec. But an infinite deal of time which ought to have been employed in making ſure of the cod, and ſeveral other fiſheries, with which this ſea abounds, and in fortifying ourſelves in thoſe poſts, the importance of which we have been too long in diſcovering, has been loſt in carrying on the fur trade. It was natural for us, having near us ſo ſure and commodious ſheltering to have gone thither to wait the return of a favourable wind, but we expected it to return every moment, and we thought to make the moſt of it the moment it ſprung up.

At laſt, on Tueſday the 10th of September, towards noon, the northweſt fell; then finding ourſelves without being able to advance, nor even almoſt to work the ſhip, we amuſed ourſelves in fiſhing, and this too coſt us very dear. For the man at the helm being more attentive to the fiſhing than to his rudder, let the ſhip go up into the wind, which occaſioned the ſails to lie aback. During the calm, we had already driven conſiderably on the iſland of Anticoſti, and the accident I have been ſpeaking of cauſed us come ſo near it. As the current carried us that way, that we already could diſtinctly diſcern the breakers, with which the iſland is lined on this ſide; to compleat our misfortune,

the ſmall breath of wind which had juſt riſen failed us in our greateſt need.

Had the calm continued for ever ſo ſhort a while, there had been an end of us. A moment after our ſails filled a little, and we had a mind to bring the ſhip about; but ſhe, contrary to cuſtom, refuſed to ſtay, and that twice running; a certain proof that the current which acted upon her was very ſtrong. We now thought ourſelves paſt all hope, becauſe we were too near the rocks to riſk wearing her; but after all we had no other method left. We therefore ſet hand to the work, more that we might have nothing to reproach ourſelves with, than from any hope of ſaving our lives; and in that very inſtant we experienced the truth of this maxim, that God helps thoſe who help themſelves. The wind ſhifted to the north, and freſhned by little and little, ſo that towards ſeven o'clock in the evening we had quite cleared the point of Anticoſti, which had filled us with ſo much apprehenſion.

This iſland extends for about forty leagues from north-eaſt to ſouth-weſt, almoſt in the middle of the river St. Laurence, being at the ſame time extremely narrow. It had been granted to the Sieur Joliet, on his return from the diſcovery of the Miſſiſſippi, a preſent of no great value; this iſland is abſolutely good for nothing. It is ill wooded, its ſoil barren, and without a ſingle harbour where any veſſel can lie in ſafety. There was a rumour ſome years ſince, that a ſilver mine had been diſcovered on it, and for want of miners a goldſmith was ſent from Quebec, where I then was, to make an eſſay of it; but he made no great progreſs. He ſoon perceived by the diſcourſe of him who had given information of it, that the mine exiſted only in the brain

brain of this perſon, who was inceſſantly recommending to him to put his truſt in the Lord. He was of opinion, that if truſt in God was ſufficient to make him diſcover a mine there was no neceſſity of going to Anticoſti to find it, ſo that he returned as he came. The coaſts of this iſland are abundantly well ſtocked with fiſh; I am notwithſtanding of opinion, that the heirs of the Sieur Joliet, would willingly exchange their immenſe lordſhip for the ſmalleſt fief in France.

After having paſſed this iſland you have the pleaſure of always being between two ſhores, and to make ſure of the progreſs you have made; but there is a neceſſity of uſing much precaution in ſailing on this great river. On Thurſday the third, we left on the larboard ſide the *Mounts Notre Dame* and *Mount Louys*; this is a chain of very high mountains; between which there are ſeveral vallies, which were formerly inhabited by Indians. In the neighbourhood of Mount Lewis, there are even very good lands, and on them ſeveral French plantations. A very advantageous ſettlement might be made here for the fiſhery, eſpecially the whale-fiſhery, and it would alſo be of uſe to the ſhips which come from France; they might there find refreſhments of which they are ſometimes in extreme want. In the night following, the wind encreaſed, and had very near done us an ill turn. We were no great way from Trinity-point, which we were to leave on our left, but our pilots did not believe themſelves ſo near it; and they even imagined they had given it a ſufficient birth ſo as to have nothing to fear from it. Monſieur de Voutron ſtarting up from his ſleep called out to bear away. Had this order been poſtponed but for one quarter of an hour, the ſhip muſt have been daſhed to pieces upon

on the point, which appeared ſome moments afterwards. On the fourth in the evening we came to anchor, for the firſt time, a little above what is called the *Paps of Matane*. Theſe are two ſummits of the ſame mountain, ſituated at the diſtance of two leagues from the river. I do not believe that a wilder country can any where be ſeen. Nothing appears on all hands but impenetrable thickets, rocks, and ſands, without one inch of good land. There are, it is true, fine ſprings, excellent game, and that in great plenty, but hunting is here almoſt utterly impracticable to any except Indians and Canadians.

We remained here four days, as on the other ſide of the river we had to avoid the ſhoal of *Manicouagau*, famous for ſhipwrecks, and which advances two leagues into the river. It takes its name from a river proceeding from the mountains of Labrador, which forms a pretty large lake of the ſame name, but more commonly known by that of St. Barnabas, and which empties itſelf acroſs this ſhoal. Some of our maps call it *la riviere Noire*, or Black River.

On the eighth we made ſail; though, for any way we made it was hardly worth while; but variety ſerves to divert one, and exerciſe is of uſe to the ſailors. In the night, between the 10th and 11th, we made fifteen leagues; had we got half a league further we ſhould have got over the moſt critical part of the whole river. We ſhould, beſides, have got up as high as the ſtrong tides, for hitherto they are ſcarce perceptible, except near the ſhore; but the wind ſhifted of a ſudden to the ſouth-weſt, ſo that we were obliged to look out for a place of ſhelter which we found under *L'Iſle Verte*, or Green-

Iſland,

Iſland, where we remained five days. Here we wanted for nothing, but at the expiration of this time we had a mind to try whether we ſhould be able to find, as we had been made to hope, land-winds on the north ſhore, which might carry us into the high tides.

We therefore came to an anchor at *Moulin Baude*; this traverſe is five leagues. On my arrival I aſked to ſee this mill, and was ſhewn ſome rocks from which iſſues a ſmall rill of chryſtal water, ſufficient at leaſt to make a mill go; there is, however, no likelihood of a mill ever being built here. There is not, perhaps, in the whole world a more uninhabitable country than this. The Saguenay lies ſomewhat higher; this is a river capable of carrying the largeſt ſhips twenty-five leagues above its mouth. Entering this river you leave on the right hand the port of Tadouſſac, where moſt part of our geographers have placed a city; but there never was more than one French houſe in it, with ſome huts of Indians that came here in trading time, and who afterwards carried their huts away with them as they do with the booths of a fair. This is what conſtituted the whole of the city.

It is true that this port was for a long time the reſort of all the Indian nations of the north and eaſt; that the French repaired thither as ſoon as the navigation was open, whether from France or from Canada; and laſtly, that the miſſionaries profiting of this opportunity, came thither to negociate in quality of factors for the kingdom of heaven. The fair being ended, the merchants returned to their own homes, the Indians took the road of their foreſts or villages, and the labourers in the harveſt of the goſpel followed theſe latter to cultivate

vate the divine ſeed ſown in their minds. Notwithſtanding both the relations which have been publiſhed, and thoſe who have travelled thither have ſaid a great deal on the ſubject of Tadouſſac, and our geographers have ſuppoſed it to be a city; and ſome authors have even advanced that it had a juriſdiction belonging to it.

In other reſpects Tadouſſac is an excellent harbour, and I have been aſſured, that five and twenty ſhips of war might be ſheltered in it from all winds, that the anchorage is ſure in it, and that its entry is extreamly eaſy. Its form is almoſt round, and it is ſurrounded on all ſides by ſteep rocks of a prodigious height, from whence iſſues a ſmall rivulet capable of ſupplying all the ſhips with water. This whole country is full of marble, but its greateſt riches would be that of the whale-fiſhery. In 1705, being at anchor with the ſhip Hero in the ſame place, I ſaw at the ſame time four of theſe fiſhes, which from head to tail were almoſt as long as our ſhip. The Baſques formerly carried on this fiſhery with ſucceſs; and there are, on a ſmall iſland which bears their name, and which lies a little below Green-Iſland, the remains of furnaces and the ribs of whales. What a mighty difference muſt there be between a ſedentary and domeſtic fiſhery, which might be carried on at one's eaſe in a river, and that which is followed on the coaſts of Greenland with ſo much riſk and at ſo vaſt an expence.

The two following days no land-wind, and we regret extremely our former anchoring-place, at which there were French plantations, whereas here there are neither men nor beaſts to be ſeen. At length, on the third day at noon, we anchor, and

we

we clear the paſſage of *Iſle Rouge*, or Red-Iſland, which is no eaſy matter. You muſt firſt ſteer right upon this iſland, as if you had a mind to land on it; this is done to ſhun the point *aux Allouettes*, which lies at the entrance into the Saguenay on the left, and advances a good way into the river; this done, you ſtand the direct contrary way. The paſſage to the ſouthward of Red-Iſland is much ſafer; but in order to make this we muſt have returned directly back, and the wind might have come to have failed us. The *Red Iſland* is no more than a rock almoſt level with the ſurface of the water which appears of a true red colour, and on which many a ſhip has been caſt away.

Next day with little wind and the help of the tide we come to an anchor above the Iſle *aux Coudres*, which lies at fifteen leagues diſtance both from Quebec and Tadouſſac. You leave this on the left, and this paſſage is dangerous when you have not the wind to your liking; it is rapid, narrow, and a good quarter of a league in length. In Champlain's time it was much eaſier; but in 1663, an earthquake plucked up a mountain by the roots, and whirled it upon the *Iſle aux Coudres*, which it encreaſed in dimenſions more than one half, and in the place where this mountain ſtood appeared a whirlpool, which it is dangerous to approach. One might paſs to the ſouthward of the *Iſle aux Coudres*, and this paſſage would be both eaſy and without danger. It bears the name of Monſ. D' Iberville who attempted it with ſucceſs; but the general way is to paſs on the north ſide of it, and cuſtom you know is a ſovereign law for the common run of mankind.

Above this whirlpool, which I have juſt now been mentioning, is the bay of St. Paul, where begins the plantations on the north ſhore, and where there are woods of pine-trees which are much valued; here are found red pines of an extreme beauty, and which are never known to break. The ſuperiors of the ſeminary of Quebec are lords of this bay. A fine lead mine has been lately diſcovered in this place. Six leagues farther up the river is an exceeding high promontory, at which terminates a chain of mountains, ſtretching more than four hundred leagues to the weſtward; this is called Cape *Tourmente*, probably becauſe he who thus chriſtened it had met with ſome hard gales of wind under it. There is good anchoring here, where you are ſurrounded with iſlands of all ſizes which afford excellent ſhelter. The moſt conſiderable of theſe is the Iſle of Orleans, whoſe fertile fields appear in form of an amphitheatre, and agreeably terminate the proſpect. This iſland is about fourteen leagues in circuit, and was erected into an earldom in 1676, under the name of St. Lawrence, in favour of Francis Berthelot, ſecretary-general of the artillery, who had purchaſed it of Francis de Laval, firſt biſhop of Quebec. It had then four villages in it, and now has pretty populous pariſhes.

Of the two channels which this iſland forms, that to the ſouth only is navigable for ſhips. Even ſhallops cannot paſs through that to the north, except at high-water. Thus from Cape Tourmente, you muſt traverſe the river to get to Quebec, and even this is not without its difficulties; it is incommoded with ſhifting ſands, on which there is not at all times water ſufficient for the largeſt ſhips, which obliges thoſe who paſs this way not to attempt it, except in the time of flood. This difficulty might be

be ſhunned by taking the channel of M. d' Iberville. Cape Tourmente from whence this traverſe is beſt made, is a hundred and ten leagues from the ſea, the water near it ſtill continuing brackiſh. It does not become drinkable till the entrance into the two channels, which are formed by the Iſle of Orleans. This is a phenomenon pretty difficult to explain, and eſpecially, if we conſider the great rapidity of the river notwithſtanding its breadth.

The tides flow regularly in this place five hours, and ebb ſeven. At Tadouſſac they flow and ebb ſix hours, and the higher you aſcend the river the more the flux diminiſhes, and the reflux encreaſes. At the diſtance of twenty leagues above Quebec, the flux is three hours, and the reflux nine. Beyond this there is no ſenſible tide; when it is half flood in the port of Tadouſſac and at the mouth of the Saguenay, it only begins to flow at *Checoutimi* twenty five leagues up this laſt river, notwithſtanding it is high water at all theſe three places at the ſame time. This is no doubt owing to this circumſtance, that the rapidity of the Saguenay, which is ſtill greater than that of the St. Lawrence, driving back the tide, occaſions for ſome time a kind of equilibrium of the tides at *Checoutimi*, and at the entrance of this river into the St. Lawrence. This rapidity has beſides come to the pitch, in which we now ſee it, only ſince the earthquake in 1663. This earthquake overturned a mountain, and threw it into the river, which confined its channel, forming a peninſula called *Checoutimi*, beyond which is a rapid ſtream impaſſable even to canoes. The depth of the Saguenay from its mouth as high as *Checoutimi*, is equal to its rapidity. Thus it would be impoſſible to come to an anchor in it, were it not for the convenience

venience of making faſt to the trees, with which its banks are covered.

It has been moreover obſerved, that in the gulph of St. Lawrence, at the diſtance of eight or ten leagues from the ſhore, the tides vary according to the different poſitions of the land, or the difference of ſeaſons; that in ſome places they follow the courſes of the winds, and that in others they go quite contrary to the wind; that at the mouth of the river in certain months of the year the currents bear conſtantly out to ſea, and in other places ſet right in ſhore; laſtly, that in the great river itſelf, as high up as the Seven Iſlands, that is to ſay, for the ſpace of ſixty leagues it never flows on the ſouth ſide, nor ebbs on the north. It is not eaſy to give ſolid reaſons for all this, but what is moſt likely, is, that there are certain motions under water which produce thoſe irregularities, or that there are currents which ſet from the ſurface to the bottom, and from the bottom to the ſurface in the manner of a pump.

Another obſervation we may make in this place, is, that the variation of the compaſs, which in ſome ports of France is only two or three degrees north-weſt, conſtantly diminiſhes as you approach the meridian of the Azores, or weſtern Iſlands, where it is no longer ſenſible; but that beyond this it encreaſes after ſuch a rate that on the great Bank of Newfoundland, it is twenty-two degrees and upwards; that afterwards it begins to diminiſh but ſlowly, ſince it is ſtill ſixteen degrees at Quebec, and twelve in the country of the Hurons, where the ſun ſets thirty three minutes later than at that capital.

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On Sunday the 22d, we came to an anchor in the traverſe of the Iſle of Orleans, where we went aſhore whilſt we waited the return of the tide. I found the country here pleaſant, the lands good, and the planters in tolerable good circumſtances. They have the character of being ſomething addicted to witchcraft, and they are applied to, in order to know what is to happen, or what paſſes in diſtant places. As for inſtance, when the ſhips expected from France are later than ordinary, they are conſulted for intelligence concerning them, and it has been aſſerted that their anſwers have been ſometimes pretty juſt; that is to ſay, that having gueſſed once or twice right enough, and having for their own diverſion made it be believed that they ſpoke from certain knowledge, it has been imagined that they conſulted with the devil.

When James Cartier diſcovered this iſland he found it entirely covered with vines, from whence he called it the Iſle of Bacchus. This navigator was of Brittany; after him came certain Normans, who grubbed up the vines, and in the place of Bacchus ſubſtituted Pomona and Ceres. In effect, it produces good wheat and excellent fruits. They begin alſo to cultivate tobacco on it, which is far from being bad. At length on Monday the 23d, the Camel anchored before Quebec, whither I had gone two hours before in a canoe of bark. I have a voyage of a thouſand leagues to make in theſe frail vehicles, I muſt therefore accuſtom myſelf to them by degrees. And now, Madam, theſe are the circumſtances of my voyage, which I have been able to recollect; they are, as you ſee, trifles, which at moſt might be good enough to amuſe perſons, who have nothing to do on board ſhip. I ſhall, perhaps, afterwards have ſomething more intereſt-

ing to communicate to you, but ſhall add nothing to this letter, as I would not miſs the opportunity of a merchant ſhip juſt ready to ſet ſail. I ſhall alſo have the honour to write to you by the king's ſhip.

*I am*, &c.

LETTER

# LETTER III.

*Deſcription of* Quebec; *character of its inhabitants, and the manner of living in the* French *colony.*

*Quebec*, Oct. 28, 1720.

*Madam*,

I AM now going to write you ſome particulars concerning Quebec; all the deſcriptions I have hitherto ſeen of it are ſo faulty, that I imagined I ſhould do you a pleaſure in drawing you a true portrait of this capital of New France. It is truly worthy of being known, were it only for the ſingularity of its ſituation; there being no other city beſides this in the known world that can boaſt of a freſh water harbour a hundred and twenty leagues from the ſea, and that capable of containing a hundred ſhips of the line. It certainly ſtands on the moſt navigable river in the univerſe.

This great river as high as the iſland of Orleans, that is to ſay, at the diſtance of a hundred and ten or twelve leagues from the ſea, is never leſs than four or five leagues in breadth; but above this iſland it ſuddenly narrows, and that at ſuch a rate as to be no more than a mile broad at Quebec; from which circumſtance this place has been called

Quebeio or Quebec, which in the Algonquin language ſignifies a ſtrait or narrowing. The Abenaquis, whoſe language is a dialect of the Algonquin, call it Quelibec, that is to ſay, ſhut up, becauſe from the entry of the little river *de la Chaudiere*, by which theſe Indians uſually came to Quebec, from the neighbourhood of Acadia; the point of Levi, which projects towards the Iſle of Orleans, entirely hides the ſouth channel, as the Iſle of Orleans does that of the north, ſo that the port of Quebec appears from thence like a great bay.

The firſt object you perceive on your arrival in the road is a fine ſheet of water, about thirty feet in breadth, and forty high. This is ſituated cloſe by the entry of the leſſer channel of the Iſle of Orleans, and is ſeen from a long point on the ſouth-ſide of the river, which as I have already obſerved ſeems to join to the Iſle of Orleans. This caſcade is called the Falls of Montmorency, and the other Point Levi. The reaſon of which is, that the admiral de Montmorency, and the Duc de Ventadour his nephew, were ſucceſſively viceroys of New France. There is no perſon, who would not imagine, that ſo plentiful a fall of water, and which never dries up muſt proceed from ſome fine river; it is, however, no more than a puny ſtream, in which in ſome places there is hardly water up to the ankle; it flows, however conſtantly, and derives its ſource from a pleaſant lake twelve leagues diſtant from the falls.

The city ſtands a league higher, on the ſame ſide and at the place where the river is narroweſt. But between it and the Iſle of Orleans, is a baſon a large league, over every way into which diſcharges itſelf the little river St. Charles, flowing from the north-

north-weſt. Quebec ſtands between the mouth of this river and Cape Diamond, which projects a little into the river. The anchoring place is oppoſite to it, in five and twenty fathoms water good ground. Notwithſtanding when it blows hard at north-eaſt, ſhips drag their anchors ſometimes but with ſcarce any danger.

When Samuel Champlain founded this city in 1608, the tide uſually roſe to the foot of the rock. Since that time the river has retired by little and little, and has at laſt left dry a large piece of ground, on which the lower town has ſince been built, and which is now ſufficiently elevated above the water's edge, to ſecure its inhabitants againſt the inundations of the river. The firſt thing you meet with on landing is a pretty large ſquare, and of an irregular form, having in front a row of well built houſes, the back part of which leans againſt the rock, ſo that they have no great depth. Theſe form a ſtreet of a conſiderable length, occupying the whole breadth of the ſquare, and extending on the right and left as far as the two ways which lead to the upper town. The ſquare is bounded towards the left by a ſmall church, and towards the right by two rows of houſes placed in a parallel direction. There is alſo another ſtreet on the other ſide between the church and the harbour, and at the turning of the river under Cape Diamond, there is likewiſe another pretty long flight of houſes on the banks of a creek called *the Bay of Mothers*. This quarter may be reckoned properly enough a ſort of ſuburbs to the lower town.

Between this ſuburb and the great ſtreet, you go up to the higher town by ſo ſteep an aſcent, that it has been found neceſſary to cut it into ſteps. Thus

it is impoſſible to aſcend it except on foot. But in going from the ſquare towards the right a way has been made, the declivity of which is much more gentle, which is lined with houſes. At the place where theſe two ways meet begins that part of the upper town which faces the river, there being another lower town on the ſide towards the little river St. Charles. The firſt building worthy of notice you meet with on your right hand in the former of thoſe ſides, is the biſhop's palace; the left being entirely occupied with private houſes. When you are got about twenty paces farther, you find yourſelf between two tolerably large ſquares; that towards the left is the place of arms, fronting which, is the fort or citadel, where the governor-general reſides; on the oppoſite ſide ſtands the convent of the Recollects, the other ſides of the ſquare being lined with handſome houſes.

In the ſquare towards your right you come firſt of all to the cathedral, which ſerves alſo for a pariſh church to the whole city. Near this, and on the angle formed by the river St. Lawrence, and that of St. Charles ſtands the ſeminary. Oppoſite to the cathedral is the college of the jeſuits, and on the ſides between them are ſome very handſome houſes. From the place of arms run two ſtreets which are croſſed by a third, and which form a large iſle entirely occupied by the church and convent of the Recollects. From the ſecond ſquare to the river St. Charles, are two deſcents, one on the ſouth towards the ſeminary, which is very ſteep and with very few houſes on it; the other near the encloſure of the jeſuits, which is very winding, has the *Hotel Dieu*, or Hoſpital, and half-way down is lined with ſmall houſes, and terminates at the palace where the intendant reſides. On the other ſide of the Jeſuit's col-

college, where their church ſtands, is a pretty long ſtreet, in which is the convent of the Urſuline nuns. The whole of the upper town is built on a bottom partly of marble and partly of ſlate.

Such, Madam, is the topographical deſcription of Quebec, which as you ſee is of a conſiderable large extent, and in which almoſt all the houſes are built of ſtone, though for all that they do not reckon above ſeven thouſand ſouls in it *. But in order to give you a compleat idea of this city, I muſt give you a particular account of its principal edifices, and ſhall afterwards ſpeak of its fortifications. The church of the lower town was built in conſequence of a vow made during the ſiege of Quebec, in 1690. It is dedicated to our Lady of Victory, and ſerves as a chapel of eaſe for the conveniency of the inhabitants of the lower town. Its ſtructure is extremely ſimple, a modeſt neatneſs forming all its ornament. Some ſiſters of the congregation, whom I ſhall have occaſion to mention in the ſequel, are eſtabliſhed to the number of four or five, between this church and the port, where they teach a ſchool.

In the epiſcopal palace there is nothing finiſhed but the chapel, and one half of the building projected by the plan, according to which it is to be an oblong ſquare. If it is ever compleated, it will be a magnificent edifice. The garden extends to the brow of the rock, and commands the proſpect of all the road. When the capital of New France, ſhall have become as flouriſhing as that of Old France (and we ſhould not deſpair of any thing,

* One may eaſily ſee by the plan of this city that it has conſiderably encreaſed within theſe twenty years laſt paſt.

Paris having been for a long time much inferior to what Quebec is at this day) as far as the ſight can reach, nothing will be ſeen but towns, villas, pleaſure houſes, and all this is already chalked out; when the great river St. Lawrence, who rowls majeſtically his waters which he brings from the extremities of the north or weſt ſhall be covered with ſhips; when the iſle of Orleans and both ſhores of each of the rivers which form this port, ſhall diſcover fine meadows, fruitful hills, and fertile fields, and in order to accompliſh this, there wants only more inhabitants; when part of the river St. Charles, which agreeably meanders through a charming valley, ſhall be joined to the city, the moſt beautiful quarter of which it will undoubtedly form; when the whole road ſhall have been faced with magnificent quays, and the port ſurrounded with ſuperb edifices; and when we ſhall ſee three or four hundred ſhips lying in it loaden with riches, of which we have hitherto been unable to avail ourſelves, and bringing in exchange thoſe of both worlds, you will then acknowledge, Madam, that this terras muſt afford a proſpect which nothing can equal, and that even now it ought to be ſomething ſingularly ſtriking.

The cathedral would make but an indifferent pariſh church in one of the ſmalleſt towns in France; judge then whether it deſerves to be the ſeat of the ſole biſhoprick in all the French empire in America, which is much more extenſive than that of the Romans ever was. No architecture, the choir, the great altar, and chapels, have all the air of a country church. What is moſt paſſable in it, is a very high tower, ſolidly built, and which, at a diſtance, has no bad effect. The ſeminary which adjoins to this church is a large ſquare, the buildings

of

of which are not yet finiſhed, what is already compleated is well executed, and has all the conveniencies neceſſary in this country. This houſe is now rebuilding for the third time, it was burnt down to the ground in 1703, and in the month of October, in the year 1705, when it was near compleatly rebuilt, it was again almoſt entirely conſumed by the flames. From the garden you diſcover the whole of the road and the river St. Charles, as far as the eye can reach.

The fort or citadel is a fine building, with two pavilions by way of wings; you enter it through a ſpacious and regular court, but it has no garden belonging to it, the fort being built on the brink of the rock. This defect is ſupplied in ſome meaſure with a beautiful gallery, with a balcony, which reaches the whole length of the building; it commands the road, to the middle of which one may be eaſily heard by means of a ſpeaking trumpet; and hence too you ſee the whole lower town under your feet. On leaving the fort, and turning to the left, you enter a pretty large eſplanade, and by a gentle declivity you reach the ſummit of Cape Diamond, which makes a very fine platform. Beſides the beauty of the proſpect, you breathe in this place the pureſt air; you ſee from it a number of porpoiſes as white as ſnow playing on the ſurface of the water, and you ſometimes find a ſort of diamonds on it finer than thoſe of Alençon. I have ſeen ſome of them full as well cut as if they had come from the hand of the moſt expert workman. They were formerly found here in great plenty, and hence this cape has the name it bears. At preſent they are very ſcarce. The deſcent towards the country is ſtill more gentle than that towards the eſplanade.

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The Fathers Recollects have a large and beautiful church, which might do them honour even at Verſailles. It is very neatly wainſcotted, and is adorned with a large *Tribune* or gallery ſomewhat heavy, but the wainſcotting of which is extremely well carved, which goes quite round, and in which are included the confeſſion ſeats. This is the work of one of their brother converts. In a word, nothing is wanting to render it compleat, except the taking away ſome pictures very coarſely daubed; brother Luke has put up ſome of his hand which have no need of thoſe foils. Their houſe is anſwerable to the church; it is large, ſolid, and commodious, and adorned with a ſpacious and well-cultivated garden. The Urſiline nuns have ſuffered by two fires as well as the ſeminary; and beſides, their funds are ſo ſmall, and the dowries they receive with the girls in this country are ſo moderate, that after their houſe was burnt down for the firſt time, it was reſolved to ſend them back to France. They have, however, had the good fortune to recover themſelves both times, and their church is now actually finiſhed. They are neatly and commodiouſly lodged, which is the fruit of the good example they ſet the reſt of the colony by their oeconomy, their ſobriety and induſtry; they gild, embroider, and are all uſefully employed, and what comes out of their hands is generally of a good taſte.

You have no doubt read in ſome relations, that the college of the jeſuits was a very fine building. It is certain, that when this city was no more than an unſeemly heap of French barracks, and huts of Indians, this houſe, which with the fort, were the only edifices built with ſtone, made ſome appearance; the firſt travellers, who judged of it by compariſon, repreſented it as a very fine ſtructure, thoſe

who followed them, and who, according to cuſtom copied from them, expreſſed themſelves in the ſame manner. Notwithſtanding the huts having ſince diſappeared, and the barracks having been changed into houſes moſt of them well-built, the college in ſome ſort diſfigures the city, and threatens falling to ruin every day.

Its ſituation is far from being advantageous, it being deprived of the greateſt beauty it could poſſibly have had, which is that of the proſpect. It had at firſt a diſtant view of the road, and its founders were ſimple enough to imagine they would always be allowed to enjoy it; but they were deceived. The cathedral and ſeminary now hide it, leaving them only the proſpect of the ſquare, which is far from being a ſufficient compenſation for what they loſt. The court of this college is little and ill-kept, and reſembles more than any thing elſe a farmer's yard. The garden is large and well-kept, being terminated by a ſmall wood, the remains of the ancient foreſt which formerly covered this whole mountain *.

The church has nothing worth notice on the outſide except a handſome ſteeple; it is entirely roofed with ſlate, and is the only one in all Canada which has this advantage; all the buildings here being generally covered with ſhingles. It is very much ornamented in the inſide; the gallery is bold, light, and well-wrought, and is ſurrounded with an iron baluſtrade, painted and gilt, and of excellent workmanſhip; the pulpit is all gilt, and the work both in iron and wood excellent; there are three altars

* The college has ſince been rebuilt from the foundation, and is at preſent a noble building.

hand-

handſomely deſigned, ſome good pictures, and is without any dome or cupola, but a flat cieling handſomely ornamented; it has no ſtone pavement, in place of which it is floored with ſtrong planks, which makes this church ſupportable in winter, whilſt you are pierced with cold in the others. I make no mention of *four large maſſy cylindrical columns, each of a ſingle block of a certain ſort of porphyry, black as jet, and without either ſpots or veins*, with which the baron de la Hontan has thought fit to enrich the great altar; they would certainly do better than thoſe actually there, which are hollow and coarſely daubed in imitation of marble. One might, however, have forgiven this author, if he had never diſfigured the truth, except to add luſtre to churches.

The *Hotel Dieu*, or hoſpital has two large wards, one for men and the other for women. The beds here are kept exceeding clean, the ſick are well attended, and every thing is commodious and extremely neat. The church ſtands behind the women's ward, and has nothing worth notice except the great altar. The houſe is ſerved by the nuns Hoſpitallers of St. Auguſtine, of the congregation of the Mercy of Jeſus; the firſt of whom come originally from Dieppe. They have begun to build themſelves a commodious apartment, but will not, in all likelihood, ſoon finiſh it for want of funds. As their houſe is ſituated on the deſcent, half-way down the hill, on a flat place, which extends a little towards the river St. Charles, they enjoy a very pleaſant proſpect.

The intendant's houſe is called the palace, becauſe the ſuperior council aſſembles in it. This is a large pavilion the two extremities of which project ſome

feet,

feet, and to which you aſcend by a double flight of ſtairs. The garden front which faces the little river, which ſtands very near upon a level with it, is much more agreeable than that by which you enter. The king's magazines face the court on the right ſide, and behind that is the priſon. The gate by which you enter is hid by the mountain, on which the upper town ſtands, and which on this ſide affords no proſpect, except that of a ſteep rock, extremely diſagreeable to the ſight. It was ſtill worſe before the fire, which reduced ſome years ago this whole palace to aſhes; it having at that time no outer court, and the buildings then facing the ſtreet which was very narrow. As you go along this ſtreet, or to ſpeak more properly, this road, you come firſt of all into the country, and at the diſtance of half a quarter of a league you find the Hoſpital-General. This is the fineſt houſe in all Canada, and would be no diſparagement to our largeſt cities in France; the Fathers Recollects formerly owned the ground on which it ſtands. M. de St. Vallier, biſhop of Quebec, removed them into the city, bought their ſettlement, and expended a hundred thouſand crowns in buildings, furniture, and in foundations. The only fault of this hoſpital is its being built in a marſh; they hope to be able to remedy it by draining this marſh; but the river St. Charles makes a winding in this place, into which the waters do not eaſily flow, ſo that this inconvenience can never be effectually removed.

The prelate, who is the founder, has his apartment in the houſe, which he makes his ordinary reſidence; having let his palace, which is alſo his own building, for the benefit of the poor. He even is not above ſerving as chaplain to the hoſpital, as well as to the nuns, the functions of which office, he

he fills with a zeal and application which would be admired in a ſimple prieſt who got his bread by it. The artizans, or others, who on account of their great age, are without the means of getting their ſubſiſtence, are received into this hoſpital till all the beds in it are full, and thirty nuns are employed in ſerving them. Theſe are a Scion or Colony from the hoſpital of Quebec; but in order to diſtinguiſh them, the biſhop has given them certain peculiar regulations, and obliges them to wear a ſilver croſs on their breaſt. Moſt part of them are young women of condition, and as they are not thoſe of the eaſieſt circumſtances in the country the biſhop has portioned ſeveral of them.

Quebec is not regularly fortified, but they have been long employed in rendering it a place of ſtrength. This city would not be eaſily taken even in the condition in which it now is. The harbour is flanked by two baſtions, which in high tides are almoſt level with the ſurface of the water, that is to ſay, they are elevated five and twenty feet from the ground, for ſo high do the tides flow in the time of the equinox. A little above the baſtion on the right, has been built a half baſtion, which is cut out of the rock, and a little higher, on the ſide towards the gallery of the fort is a battery of twenty-five pieces of cannon. Higher ſtill is a ſmall ſquare fort, called the citadel, and the ways which communicate from one fortification to another are extremely ſteep. To the left of the harbour quite along the road, as far as the river St. Charles, are good batteries of cannon with ſeveral mortars.

From the angle of the citadel, which fronts the city has been built an oreillon of a baſtion, from whence has been drawn a curtain at right angles, which

which communicates with a very elevated cavalier, on which ſtands a windmill fortified. As you deſcend from this cavalier, and at the diſtance of a muſket ſhot from it, you meet firſt a tower fortified with a baſtion, and at the ſame diſtance from this a ſecond. The deſign was to line all this with ſtone, which was to have had the ſame angles with the baſtions, and to have terminated at the extremity of the rock, oppoſite to the palace, where there is already a ſmall redoubt, as well as on Cape Diamond. Why this has not been put in execution I have not learned. Such, Madam, was the condition of the place nearly in 1711, when the Engliſh fitted out a great armament for the conqueſt of Canada, which was caſt away through the temerity of the admiral, who, contrary to the advice of his pilot, went too near to the Seven Iſlands, where he loſt all his largeſt ſhips, and three thouſand of his beſt troops.

Quebec is ſtill at this day in the ſame ſituation, which you may aſſure yourſelf of by the plan in relievo, which M. de Chauſſegros de Leri, chief engineer, ſends into France this year, to be placed with the other plans of fortified places in the Louvre. After having informed you of what relates to the exterior of our capital, I muſt now ſay a word or two with reſpect to its principal inhabitants; this is its beſt ſide, and if by conſidering only its houſes, ſquares, ſtreets, churches, and publick buildings, we might reduce it to the rank of our ſmalleſt cities in France, yet the quality of thoſe who inhabit it, will ſufficiently vindicate us in beſtowing upon it the title of a capital.

I have already ſaid, that they reckon no more than ſeven thouſand ſouls at Quebec; yet you find

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in it a ſmall number of the beſt company, where nothing is wanting that can poſſibly contribute to form an agreeable ſociety. A governor-general, with an etat-major, a nobleſſe, officers, and troops, an intendant, with a ſuperior council, and ſubaltern juriſdictions, a commiſſary of the marine, a grand provoſt, and ſurveyor of the highways, with a grand maſter of the waters and foreſts, whoſe juriſdiction is certainly the moſt extenſive in the world; rich merchants, or ſuch as live as if they were ſo; a biſhop and numerous ſeminary; the recollects and jeſuits, three communities of women well educated, aſſemblies, full as brilliant as any where, at the lady Governeſs's, and lady Intendants. Enough, in my opinion, to enable all ſorts of perſons whatever to paſs their time very agreeably.

They accordingly do ſo, every one contributing all in his power to make life agreeable and chearful. They play at cards, or go abroad on parties of pleaſure in the ſummer-time in calaſhes or canoes, in winter, in ſledges upon the ſnow, or on ſkaits upon the ice. Hunting is a great exerciſe amongſt them, and there are a number of gentlemen who have no other way of providing handſomely for their ſubſiſtence. The current news conſiſt of a a very few articles, and thoſe of Europe arrive all at once, though they ſupply matter of diſcourſe for great part of the year. They reaſon like politicians on what is paſt, and form conjectures on what is likely to happen; the ſciences and fine arts have alſo their part, ſo that the converſation never flags for want of matter. The Canadians, that is to ſay, the Creoles of Canada draw in with their native breath an air of freedom, which renders them very agreeable in the commerce of life, and no where in the world is our language ſpoken in greater purity.

fity. There is not even the ſmalleſt foreign accent remarked in their pronunciation.

You meet with no rich men in this country, and it is really great pity, every one endeavouring to put as good a face on it as poſſible, and nobody ſcarce thinking of laying up wealth. They make good cheer, provided they are alſo able to be at the expence of fine cloaths; if not, they retrench in the article of the table to be able to appear well dreſſed. And indeed, we muſt allow, that dreſs becomes our Creolians extremely well. They are all here of very advantageous ſtature, and both ſexes have the fineſt complexion in the world; a gay and ſprightly behaviour, with great ſweetneſs and politeneſs of manners are common to all of them; and the leaſt ruſticity, either in language or behaviour, is utterly unknown even in the remoteſt and moſt diſtant parts.

The caſe is very different as I am informed with reſpect to our Engliſh neighbours, and to judge of the two colonies by the way of life, behaviour, and ſpeech of the inhabitants, nobody would heſitate to ſay that ours were the moſt flouriſhing. In New-England and the other provinces of the continent of America, ſubject to the Britiſh empire, there prevails an opulence which they are utterly at a loſs how to uſe; and in New France, a poverty hid by an air of being in eaſy circumſtances, which ſeems not at all ſtudied. Trade, and the cultivation of their plantations ſtrengthen the firſt, whereas the ſecond is ſupported by the induſtry of its inhabitants; and the taſte of the nation diffuſes over it ſomething infinitely pleaſing. The Engliſh planter amaſſes wealth, and never makes any ſuperfluous expence; the French inhabitant again enjoys what he

has acquired, and often makes a parade of what he is not poſſeſſed of. That labours for his poſterity; this again leaves his offspring involved in the ſame neceſſities he was in himſelf at his firſt ſetting out, and to extricate themſelves as they can. The Engliſh Americans are averſe to war, becauſe they have a great deal to loſe; they take no care to manage the Indians from a belief that they ſtand in no need of them. The French youth, for very different reaſons, abominate the thoughts of peace, and live well with the natives, whoſe eſteem they eaſily gain in time of war, and their friendſhip at all times. I might carry the parallel a great way farther, but I am obliged to conclude; the King's ſhip is juſt going to ſet ſail, and the merchantmen are making ready to follow her, ſo that, perhaps, in three days time, there will not be ſo much as a ſingle veſſel of any ſort in the road.

*I am*, &c.

LETTER

# LETTER IV.

*Of the* Huron *village of* Loretto. *The cauſes which have prevented the progreſs of the* French *colony of* Canada. *Of the current money.*

*Madam,* *Quebec, Feb.* 15, 1721.

I AM juſt returned from a little journey or pilgrimage of devotion, of which I ſhall give you an account; but I muſt in the firſt place inform you, that I was miſtaken when in the concluſion of my laſt letter I had told you, that before three days were over, the road of Quebec would be empty. A ſhip belonging to Marſeilles is ſtill there, and has even found the means of being ſo under the protection of the ice with which the river is covered. This is a ſecret which may have its uſe. It is good to have reſources againſt all accidents that can happen.

The captain of this veſſel had taken up his anchors on the ſecond of September towards evening, and after falling down the river about a league, he came to anchor again, in order to wait for ſome of his paſſengers, who came on board after it was quite dark. He gave orders to have every thing ready as ſoon as it ſhould be ebb water, and went early to bed. About midnight, he was wakened with the news that the veſſel was filling with water; he cau-

ſed all the pumps to be ſet a going but to no purpoſe. The water continued to encreaſe inſtead of diminiſhing; at laſt, every one thought upon ſaving his life, and it was time, for the laſt of them had hardly got a-ſhore when the veſſel ſunk and entirely diſappeared. A bark loaded with merchant goods for Montreal, had the ſame fate at the entrance into lake St. Peter, but they are in hopes of getting them both up, as ſoon as the good weather comes in. Some even flatter themſelves with being able to recover the greateſt part of the effects with which theſe two veſſels are loaded; others believe they will not, and I am of the ſame opinion; however, I ſhall not be here to give you an account of it. In the mean time, this affair of the Provençall veſſel may be attended with ſome conſequences, for the captain ſuſpects that ſomebody or other has played him a trick. But to return to our pilgrimage.

About three leagues from this place, towards the North-eaſt, is a ſmall village of the Indians, called Hurons, who are chriſtians, and who have a chapel built on the ſame model, and with the ſame dimenſions as the Santa Caſa of Italy, from whence an Image of the virgin, a copy of that which is in this famous ſanctuary, has been ſent to our Neophytes. A wilder place than this could not have been choſen for the ſituation of this miſſion. In the mean time, the concourſe of the faithful to this place is very great; and whether it be the effect of imagination, devotion, prejudice, or of any other cauſe, many perſons have aſſured me, that upon their arrival they have been ſeized with an inward and ſacred horror, of which they can give no account. But the ſolid piety of the inhabitants of this deſert, makes an impreſſion upon all, which

is ſo much the greater, as it is aſſiſted by thought and reflection.

The inhabitants are ſavages, or Indians, but who derive nothing from their birth and original but what is really eſtimable, that is to ſay, the ſimplicity and openneſs of the firſt ages of the world, together with thoſe improvements which Grace has made upon them; a patriarchal faith, a ſincere piety, that rectitude and docility of heart which conſtitute a true ſaint; an incredible innocence of manners; and laſtly, pure Chriſtianity, on which the world has not yet breathed that contagious air which corrupts it; and that frequently attended with acts of the moſt heroick virtue. Nothing can be more affecting than to hear them ſing in two choirs, the men on one ſide, and the women on the other, the prayers and hymns of the church in their own language. Nor is there any thing which can be compared to that fervour and modeſty which they diſplay in all their religious exerciſes; and I have never ſeen any one, who was not touched with it to the bottom of his heart.

This village has been formerly much better peopled than at preſent, but diſtempers, and I know not what cauſe, which inſenſibly reduces to nothing all the nations of this continent, have greatly diminiſhed the number of its inhabitants. The old age and infirmities of ſome of their ancient paſtors had likewiſe occaſioned the falling off of ſome from their primitive zeal, but it has been no difficult matter to bring them back to it again; and he who directs them at preſent has nothing to do but to keep things on the ſame footing in which he found them. It is true, that it is impoſſible to carry to a farther length than has been done the precautions they uſe

to prevent the introducing any new relaxation of manners. Intoxicating liquors, the moſt common and almoſt the ſole ſtumbling block, which is able to cauſe the ſavages to fall off, are prohibited by a ſolemn vow, the breach of which is ſubmitted to a publick penance, as well as every other fault which occaſions ſcandal; and a relapſe is generally ſufficient to baniſh the criminal without any hopes of return from a place, which ought to be the impregnable fortreſs and the ſacred aſylum of piety and innocence. Peace and ſubordination reign here in a perfect manner; and this village ſeems to conſtitute but one family, which is regulated by the pureſt maxims of the goſpel. This muſt always occaſion matter of ſurprize to every one, who conſiders to what a height theſe people, particularly the Hurons, uſually carry their natural fierceneſs and the love of independance.

The greateſt, and perhaps the only trouble which the miſſionary has, is to find wherewithal to ſubſiſt his flock; the territory which he poſſeſſes, not being ſufficient for that purpoſe, and there are very good reaſons againſt abandoning it; however, Providence ſupplies this defect. Monſieur and Madame Begon were of our pilgrimage, and were received by our good Neophytes as perſons of their rank ought to be, who, at the ſame time, never ſuffered them to want the neceſſaries of life. After a reception, entirely military on the part of the warriors, and the acclamations of the multitude, they began with exerciſes of piety, which contributed to the mutual edification of all preſent. This was followed with a general feſtival at the expence of Madam Begon, who received all the honours of it. The men, according to cuſtom, eat in one houſe, and the women with the little children in another. I

call

call it a houſe and not a cabin, for theſe Indians have for ſome time lived after the French manner.

The women on ſuch occaſions teſtify their gratitude only by their ſilence and modeſty; but becauſe this was the firſt lady in the colony, who had ever regaled the whole village, an orator was granted to the Huron women, by whoſe mouth they diſplayed all the grateful ſentiments of their hearts towards their illuſtrious benefactreſs. As for the men, after their chief had harangued the Intendant, they danced and ſung as much as they thought fit. Nothing, Madam, can be leſs entertaining than thoſe ſongs and dances. At firſt, they ſeat themſelves on the ground, like ſo many apes without any order; from time to time one man riſes, and advances ſlowly to the middle of the place, always as they ſay in cadence, turning his head from one ſide to the other, and ſinging an air, containing not the ſmalleſt melody to any ear but that of a ſavage or Indian, and pronouncing a few words which are of no ſignification. Sometimes it is a war-ſong, ſometimes a death-ſong, ſometimes an attack, or a ſurprize; for as theſe people drink nothing but water, they have no drinking ſongs, and they have not as yet thought of making any on their amours. Whilſt this perſon is ſinging, the pit or audience never ceaſe beating time, by drawing from the bottom of their breaſt a *Hé*, being a note which never varies. The connoiſſeurs, to whom I refer the matter, pretend that they are never once out in keeping time.

As ſoon as one perſon has given over, another takes his place, and this continues till the ſpectators thank them for their entertainment, which they would not be long of doing were it not convenient

to ſhew a little complaiſance to thoſe people. Their muſick is indeed very far from being agreeable, at leaſt, if I may form a judgment of it from what I have heard of it.

It is however quite another thing at church; the women particularly having a ſurprizing ſoftneſs of voice, and at the ſame time a conſiderable ſhare of taſte as well as genius for muſick.

On ſuch occaſions their harangue or oration is extremely worthy of attention; they explain, in a few words, and almoſt always in a very ingenious manner, the occaſion of the feſtival, which they never fail to aſcribe to very generous motives. The praiſes of him who is at the expence are not forgotten, and they ſometimes take the opportunity, when certain perſonages, particularly when the Governor-general or Intendant are preſent, to aſk a favour, or to repreſent their grievances. The orator of the Huron women ſaid that day in his harangue ſome things ſo very extraordinary, that we could not help ſuſpecting that the interpreter, then Peter Daniel Ricker, the miſſionary, had lent him ſome of his wit and politeneſs; but he proteſted he had added nothing of his own; which we believed, becauſe we knew him to be one of the openeſt and ſincereſt men in the world.

Before this little journey, I had made ſome ſmall excurſions in the neighbourhood of this city, but as the ground was every where covered with ſnow to the depth of five or ſix feet, I have not thereby been enabled to ſpeak much of the nature of the country. Notwithſtanding, having before travelled over it at all ſeaſons of the year, I can aſſure you that you very rarely meet any where elſe with a more fer-

tile

tile country, or a better ſoil. I have applied myſelf particularly this winter to learn what advantages may be drawn from this colony, and I ſhall now communicate to you the fruit of my enquiries. It is a complaint as old as the colony itſelf, and not without foundation, that Canada does not enrich France. It is likewiſe true that none of the inhabitants are rich; but is this the fault of the country itſelf, or rather of its firſt ſettlers? I ſhall endeavour to put you in the way of forming a judgment on this article.

The original ſource of the misfortune of theſe provinces, which they have honoured with the fine name of *New France*, is the report which was at firſt ſpread in the kingdom, that there were no mines in them, and their not paying ſufficient attention to a much greater advantage which may be drawn from this colony, which is the augmentation of trade; that in order to bring this about ſettlements muſt be made; that this is done by little and little, and without being ſenſibly felt in ſuch a kingdom as France; that the two only objects which preſent themſelves at firſt view in *Canada* and *Acadia*, I mean the fiſhery and fur trade, abſolutely require that theſe two countries ſhould be well peopled; and that if they had been ſo, perhaps, they would have ſent greater returns to France, than Spain has drawn from the richeſt provinces of the New World, eſpecially, if they had added to theſe articles the building of ſhips; but the ſplendor of the gold and ſilver which came from Peru and Mexico, dazzled the eyes of all Europe in ſuch a manner, that any country which did not produce theſe precious metals was looked upon as abſolutely good for nothing. Let us ſee what a ſenſible author who has been on the ſpot ſays upon this head.

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The common queſtions they aſk us, ſays Mark Leſcarbot, are, " Are there any treaſures to be found in that country? Any gold and ſilver? But nobody enquires whether the people are diſpoſed to hear and reliſh the doctrines of Chriſtianity. It is, however, certain, that there are mines here, but theſe muſt be wrought with induſtry, labour, and patience. The beſt mine I know is corn and wine, together with the raiſing of cattle; he who poſſeſſes theſe things has money; but we do not live by mines. The mariners who come in queſt of fiſh from all parts of Europe, above eight or nine hundred leagues from their own country, find the beſt of mines, without blowing up rocks, digging into the entrails of the earth, or living in the obſcurity of the infernal regions.—They find, I ſay, the beſt of mines in the bottom of the waters, and in the trade of furs and ſkins, by which they make good money."

Not only a bad character has been given to New France without knowing it; but even thoſe who imagined they ſhould draw advantages from it, have not purſued the meaſures proper for that purpoſe. In the firſt place, they were a very long time in fixing themſelves; they cleared lands without having well examined them, they ſowed them, and built houſes on them, and afterwards frequently deſerted them, without knowing why, and went to ſettle elſewhere. This inconſtancy has contributed more than any thing to make us loſe Acadia, and prevent us from drawing any advantage from it, during the time we were in poſſeſſion of that fine peninſula. The author, already cited, who was a witneſs of this our wavering and irreſolute conduct, ſcruples not to upbraid thoſe with it who were the moſt culpable. " It is thus," ſays he, " that we have

have made levies of armed men, that we have hurried with ardour into new undertakings, that we have laid down and begun the fineſt projects, and in the end have deſerted them all. . . . . Indeed to be ſucceſsful in ſuch enterprizes we ought to be well ſupported; but we ought likewiſe to have men of reſolution, who will not retract, but carry this point of honour always in their eyes, *to conquer or die*, it being a great and a glorious thing to die in the execution of a noble deſign, ſuch as laying the foundations of a new kingdom, or eſtabliſhing the Chriſtian faith among a people unacquainted with the true God." I could puſh theſe reflections a great deal farther, but am cautious of engaging in a diſpute, into which I neither can nor ought to enter with the knowledge I have of it at preſent.

I come now to the commerce of Canada. This has turned for a long time ſolely upon the fiſhery and fur-trade. The cod-fiſhery had been carried on upon the great bank, and the coaſts of Newfoundland, long before the diſcovery of the river St. Laurence, but we were too late in making a ſettlement on that iſland, and ſuffered the Engliſh to get the ſtart of us. At laſt we got poſſeſſion of the harbour and bay of Placentia, where our royal ſquadrons have been at anchor oftener than once; we have withſtood ſieges there, and the Canadian militia have performed warlike exploits in that place which are not inferior to thoſe of the braveſt bucaneers of St. Domingo. They have frequently laid waſte the ſettlements, and ruined the trade of the Engliſh in that iſland; but that people, from whom we eaſily took their ſtrongeſt places, were too well acquainted with their enemies to be diſconcerted in their meaſures. Accuſtomed to behold the Canadian fire kindle in the frozen regions of the

north, and go out of its own accord, when it ought to have diſplayed itſelf with the greateſt activity, they have behaved at the approach of our people, as an experienced pilot does at the ſight of an unavoidable tempeſt. They wiſely gave way to the ſtorm, and afterwards, without interruption, repaired the damages their ſettlements had received from it; and by this conduct, though continually worſted in Newfoundland, whether they acted on the offenſive or defenſive, they have always carried on an incomparably greater trade than their conquerors, and have at laſt remained the ſole maſters and peaceable poſſeſſors of that iſland.

We have behaved ſtill worſe in Canada; this great and rich province has been for a long time divided amongſt ſeveral private perſons, none of whom have enriched themſelves, whilſt the Engliſh have made immenſe profits by the fiſhery on its coaſts. The ſettlements which theſe proprietors have made, wanting ſolidity, and they themſelves being deſtitute of a regular plan, and the one deſtroying the other, they have left the country nearly in the ſame condition in which they found it, and in a ſtate of contempt and neglect from which it has not recovered till the moment we loſt it. Our enemies were the firſt who made us ſenſible of its value.

The only trade to which this colony has been long reduced, is that of furs; and the faults committed in it are paſt number. Perhaps, our national character never ſhowed itſelf in a ſtronger light than in this affair. When we diſcovered this vaſt Continent, it was full of wild beaſts. A handful of Frenchmen has made them almoſt entirely diſappear in leſs than an age, and there are ſome the ſpecies of which is entirely deſtroyed. They killed

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the elks and mouſe-deer merely for the pleaſure of killing them, and to ſhew their dexterity. They had not even the precaution to interpoſe the authority of the prince to ſtop ſuch a flagrant diſorder. But the greateſt miſchiefs aroſe from the inſatiable avidity of private perſons, who applied themſelves ſolely to this commerce.

They arrived for the moſt part from France, with nothing but what they had on their backs, and they were impatient to appear in a better ſituation. At firſt this was an eaſy matter; the Indians knew not what riches were contained in their woods, till the rapaciouſneſs with which their furs were bought up made them acquainted with it; prodigious quantities were got from them for trifles, which many would not have been at the trouble to gather together. Even ſince they have had their eyes opened with reſpect to the value of this commodity, and have acquired a taſte for ſomething more ſolid, it was for a long time very eaſy to ſatisfy them at a ſmall expence; and with a little prudence this trade might have been continued on a tolerable good footing.

Nevertheleſs, we ſhould be puzzled to name but one family at this day which has grown rich by this traffick. We have ſeen fortunes equally immenſe and ſudden, riſe up, and diſappear almoſt at the ſame time, not unlike to thoſe moving mountains mentioned by travellers, which the wind raiſes or throws down in the ſandy deſarts of Africa. Nothing has been more common in this country than to ſee people dragging out a languiſhing old age in miſery and diſgrace, after having been in a condition to ſettle themſelves on an honourable footing. After all, Madam, thoſe fortunes which private perſons, who never

never deſerved them, have failed of acquiring, are not worthy of the publick's regret, if the bad conſequences had not fallen upon the colony, which, in a ſhort time, was reduced to the condition of ſeeing a ſpring, from whence ſo much riches might have flowed into its boſom, entirely dried up or diverted into another channel.

Its great plenty was the beginning of its ruin. By means of accumulating beaver ſkins, which has always been the principal object of this commerce, ſo great a quantity were heaped up in the warehouſes that no vent could be found for them, whence it happened, that the merchants declining to buy any more, our adventurers, called here *Coureurs de Rois*, or hunters, took the reſolution of carrying them to the Engliſh, and many of them ſettled in the province of New-York. Several attempts were made to put a ſtop to the progreſs of theſe deſertions, but to little effect; on the contrary, thoſe who had been led by motives of intereſt, to take refuge among their neighbours, were kept there by the fear of puniſhment; and the vagabonds, who had acquired a taſte for a wandering and independant life, remained amongſt the ſavages or Indians, from whom they were no longer diſtinguiſhable but by their vices. They frequently had recourſe to amneſties to recal thoſe fugitives, which were at firſt of little conſequence; but in the end being managed with prudence, they produced part of the effect promiſed from them.

Another method was made uſe of which was ſtill more efficacious; but thoſe people who were zealous for good order and the advancement of religion, found the remedy worſe than the diſeaſe. This was to grant permiſſion to thoſe in whom they thought they

they could repoſe confidence to trade in the Indian countries, and to prohibit all others from going out of the colony. The number of theſe licences was limited, and they were diſtributed amongſt poor widows and orphans, who might ſell them to the *Traders* for more or leſs, according as the trade was good or bad, or according to the nature of the places to which the licences granted the liberty of trading; for they uſed the precaution to ſpecify thoſe places, to prevent too great a number from going the ſame way.

Beſides thoſe licences, the number of which was regulated by the court, and the diſtribution of which belonged to the governor-general, there were others for the commandants of forts, and for extraordinary occaſions, which the governor ſtill grants under the name of ſimple *Permiſſions*. Thus one part of our youth is continually rambling and roving about; and though thoſe diſorders, which formerly ſo much diſgraced this profeſſion, are no longer committed, at leaſt not ſo openly, yet it infects them with a habit of libertiniſm, of which they never entirely get rid; at leaſt, it gives them a diſtaſte for labour, it exhauſts their ſtrength, they become incapable of the leaſt conſtraint, and when they are no longer able to undergo the fatigues of travelling, which ſoon happens, for theſe fatigues are exceſſive, they remain without the leaſt reſource, and are no longer good for any thing. Hence it comes to paſs, that arts have been a long time neglected, a great quantity of good land remains ſtill uncultivated, and the country is but very indifferently peopled.

It has been often propoſed to aboliſh thoſe pernicious licences, not with a view of hurting the trade, but

but even of rendering it more flouriſhing, and for that purpoſe to make ſome French ſettlements in proper places, where it would be eaſy to aſſemble the Indians, at leaſt for certain ſeaſons of the year. By this means, this vaſt country would be inſenſibly filled with inhabitants, and perhaps, this is the only method by which that project which the court has ſo long had at heart of *Frenchifying* the Indians, that is the term they make uſe of, could be brought about. I believe, I may at leaſt affirm, that if this method had been followed, Canada would have been at preſent much better peopled than it is; that the Indians drawn and kept together by the comforts and conveniencies of life, which they would have found in our ſettlements, would not have been ſo miſerable, nor ſo much addicted to a wandering life, and conſequently their numbers would have encreaſed, whereas they have diminiſhed at a ſurpriſing rate, and would have attached themſelves to us in ſuch a manner that we might now have diſpoſed of them as of the ſubjects of the crown; beſides, that the miſſionaries would have had fewer obſtacles to encounter with in their converſion. What we now ſee at Loretto, and amongſt a ſmall proportion of the Iroquoiſe, Algonquins, and Abenaquis, ſettled in the colony, leaves no room to doubt the truth of what I have advanced, and there are none of thoſe who have had the greateſt intercourſe with the Indians, who do not agree, that theſe people are not to be depended on, when they are not Chriſtians. I want no other example, but that of the Abenaquis, who, though far from being numerous, have been during the two laſt wars the chief bulwark of New France againſt New England.

Beſides this project, Madam, which I have been juſt now explaining to you, is as old as the colony; it was formed by M. de Champlain its founder, and has been approved of by almoſt all the miſſionaries I have known, whoſe painful labours in the ſituation things have long been in, produce no great good effects, at leaſt in the diſtant miſſions. It would be now, indeed, too late to reſume this deſign with reſpect to the Indians, who diſappear in a manner as ſenſible as it is inconceivable. But what hinders its being followed with reſpect to the French, and enlarging the colony by degrees, till it ſhould join to that of Louiſiana, and thus ſtrengthen the one by the other? It has been in this manner, that the Engliſh, in leſs than a century and a half have peopled above five hundred leagues of the country, and formed a power upon this Continent, which when we view it nearly we cannot but behold with terror.

Canada is capable of furniſhing many articles for a trade with the Weſt-India iſlands, and ſometimes actually ſends thither no mean quantity of flour, planks, and other timber proper for building. As there is, perhaps, no country in the whole world, which produces more ſorts of wood nor of better kinds, you may judge what immenſe riches may be one day drawn from it. It appears that very few perſons are well informed with reſpect to this point. Nor am I, as yet, ſufficiently informed myſelf, to be able to enter into a more minute detail; I am ſomewhat better acquainted with what relates to the oil-trade, and ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak of it very ſoon: As I am in a hurry to finiſh this letter, I have only time to conclude what relates to the commerce of this country in general.

Nothing has in all appearance contributed more to its decay, than the frequent changes which have been made in the coin. I will give you the hiſtory of it in a few words. In 1670, the company of the Weſt-Indies, to whom the king had ceded the right to the property of the French iſlands on the Continent of America, had leave given to export to the Weſt-India iſlands, to the amount of one hundred thouſand livres, in ſmall pieces, marked with a particular ſtamp and inſcription. The king's edict is dated in the month of February, and bore that thoſe pieces ſhould only paſs current in the iſles. But in ſome difficulties which fell out, the council iſſued on the 18th of November of the year 1672, an *Arret*, by which it was ordained, that the above-mentioned, as well as all other coin which ſhould paſs current in France, ſhould alſo paſs current not only in the French iſlands, but alſo in thoſe parts of the continent of America, which are ſubject to the crown, at the rate of thirty-three and one third per cent. advance; that is to ſay, the pieces of fifteen ſols for twenty, and the others in proportion.

The ſame *Arret* ordained, that all contracts, bills, accounts, bargains, and payments, between all ſorts of perſons whatſoever, ſhould be made at a certain price in current money, without making uſe of any exchange or reckoning in ſugar, or any other commodity, on pain of nullity of the act. And with reſpect to tranſactions by-paſt, it was ordered, that all ſtipulations of contracts, bills, debts, quit-rents, leaſes, or farms of ſugar, or other commodities, ſhould be made payable in money, according to the current value of the above coin. In conſequence of this arret, the coin encreaſed one fourth in value in New France, which very ſoon occaſioned many difficulties. In effect, M. de Champigny Noroy, who

who was appointed intendant of Quebec, in 1684, and who is now in the ſame employ at Havre de Grace, found himſelf ſoon embarraſſed as well with reſpect to the payment of the troops, as to the other expences the king muſt be at in this colony.

And beſides the funds which were ſent from France, arrived almoſt always too late, the firſt of January being the day on which it was abſolutely neceſſary to pay the officers and ſoldiers, as well as to defray other charges equally indiſpenſable. To obviate the moſt preſſing demands, M. de Champigny thought proper to iſſue certain bills, which ſhould ſtand in place of coin, taking care, however, conſtantly to obſerve the augmentation of the value of the money. A verbal proceſs was drawn up of this proceeding, and, by virtue of an ordinance of the governor-general and intendant, every piece of this money, which was made of cards, had its value, with the mark of the treaſury, and the arms of France, ſtamped upon it, as were thoſe of the governor and intendant in Spaniſh wax. Afterwards paper money was ſtruck in France, and ſtamped with the ſame impreſſion as the current-money of the realm, and it was ordained, that the bills ſhould be returned into the treaſury of Canada every year, before the arrival of the ſhips from France, in order to receive an additional mark to prevent the introducing of counterfeits.

This paper-money was of no long continuance, ſo that they returned to the uſe of card-money, on which new impreſſions were ſtamped. The intendant ſigned ſuch bills as were of four livres and upwards value, only marking the others. In latter times, the governor-general ſigned alſo ſuch as were of ſix livres and above. In the beginning of the Autumn,

all the bills were carried back to the treaſurer, who gave bills of exchange for the value on the treaſurer-general of the marine at Rochefort, or his clerk, to be charged to the account of the expences of the following year. Such as were ſpoiled were no longer ſuffered to paſs current, and were burned after having firſt drawn up a verbal proceſs of it.

Whilſt theſe bills of exchange were faithfully paid, thoſe money-bills were preferred to real ſpecie; as ſoon as they ceaſed to be honoured, they gave over carrying the money-bills to the treaſurer, ſo that in 1702, M. de Champigny was at a great deal of pains to no purpoſe in endeavouring to retire all thoſe he had made. His ſucceſſors were under the neceſſity of making new ones every year, for paying of ſalaries, which multiplied them to ſuch a degree, that at laſt they became of no value at all, and nobody would receive them in payment. The conſequence of this was an entire ſtagnation of trade, and the diſorder went ſo far, that in 1713, the inhabitants propoſed to loſe one half, on condition that the king ſhould take them up and pay the other half.

This propoſal was agreed to the year following, but the orders given, in conſequence thereof, were not fully executed till 1717. A declaration was then publiſhed, aboliſhing theſe money-bills, when they begun paying the ſalaries of the officers of the colony in ſilver. The augmentation of one fourth advance, was abrogated at the ſame time: Experience having made it appear, that the augmentation of the ſpecies in a colony does not keep the money from going out of it as had been pretended, and that money could never have a free and proper circulation, but by paying in commodities whatever

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was imported from France. In effect, in this caſe, the colony keeps her money at home, whereas in the ſuppoſition that ſhe has not merchandize ſufficient to pay for all that ſhe receives, ſhe is obliged to pay the balance in ſilver, and how ſhould it be otherwiſe?

In a word, Madam, you will be ſurprized when I tell you, that in 1706, the trade of the moſt ancient of all our colonies was carried on in a bottom, or capital of no more than 650,000 livres, and things have ſince been pretty much in the ſame ſituation. Now this ſum divided amongſt thirty thouſand inhabitants is neither capable of enriching them, nor of enabling them to purchaſe the commodities of France. For this reaſon, moſt part of them go ſtark naked, eſpecially thoſe that live in remote habitations. They have not even ſo much as the advantage of ſelling the ſurplus of their commodities to the inhabitants of cities, theſe being obliged, in order to ſubſiſt, to have lands in the country, and to cultivate them themſelves for their own account.

After the king had taken Canada back again out of the hands of the companies, his majeſty expended conſiderably more on it for ſeveral years than he has done ſince; and the colony in thoſe times ſent into France to the value of near one million livres in beaver yearly, notwithſtanding it was not ſo populous as at preſent: But ſhe has always drawn more from France than ſhe has been able to pay, doing juſt as a private perſon would, who with a revenue of thirty thouſand livres, ſhould ſpend at the rate of upwards of forty thouſand. By this means, her credit has ſunk, and ſo has brought on the ruin of her trade, which, ſince the year 1706,

consisted of scarce any thing besides what is called the lesser peltry. Every merchant would be concerned in it which has occasioned its ruin, as they often paid more for them to the Indians than they were able to sell them for in France.

*I am*, &c.

LETTER

# LETTER V.

*Of the beavers of* Canada; *in what they differ from thoſe of* Europe; *of their manner of building; of the advantage which may accrue to the colony from them; of the hunting of the beaver and muſk-rat.*

*Quebec*, March 1, 1721.

*Madam*,

I Ought to have ſet out within a day or two after writing my laſt letter; but I am ſtill detained for want of a carriage. In the mean-time, I cannot do better than entertain you with an account of the curioſities of this country. I ſhall begin with the moſt ſingular article of all, that is to ſay, the beaver. The ſpoil of this animal has hitherto been the principal article in the commerce of New France. It is itſelf one of the greateſt wonders in nature, and may very well afford many a ſtriking leſſon of induſtry, foreſight, dexterity, and perſeverance in labour.

The beaver was not unknown in France before the diſcovery of America; we find in the ancient books of the Hatters of Paris, regulations for the

manufacture of beaver-hats; now the beaver of America and Europe are abſolutely the ſame animal; but whether it is, that the European beavers are become extremely rare; or that their fur is not equally good in quality with that of the beavers of America, there is no longer mention made of any, beſides this latter, except it is with reſpect to the Caſtoreum, of which I ſhall ſay a word or two in the end of this letter. I do not even know that any author has mentioned this animal, as an object of curioſity, perhaps, for want of having obſerved it cloſely enough; perhaps too, becauſe the European beavers are of the nature of land beavers, the difference of which from the others I ſhall preſently ſhew you.

However this be, the beaver of Canada is an amphibious quadruped, which cannot live for any long time in the water, and which is able to live entirely without it, provided it have the conveniency of bathing itſelf ſometimes. The largeſt beavers are ſomewhat leſs than four feet in length and fifteen inches in breadth over the haunches, weighing about ſixty pounds. Its colour is different according to the different climates, in which it is found. In the moſt diſtant northern parts they are generally quite black, though there are ſometimes found beavers entirely white. In the moſt temperate countries they are brown, their colour becoming lighter and lighter in proportion as they approach toward the ſouth. In the country of the Illinois, they are almoſt yellow, and ſome are even ſeen of a ſtraw-colour. It has alſo been obſerved, that in proportion as their colour is lighter they yield a leſs quantity of fur, and conſequently are leſs valuable. This is plainly the work of Providence, which ſecures them from the cold in proportion as they are expoſed to it.

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The fur is of two ſorts all the body over, excepting at the feet, where it is very ſhort. The longeſt of it is from eight to ten lines in length, and it even goes ſometimes on the back as far as two inches, diminiſhing gradually towards the head and tail. This part of the fur is harſh, courſe, and ſhining, and is properly that which gives the animal its colour. In viewing it through a microſcope, you obſerve the middle leſs opake, which proves it to be hollow, for which cauſe no uſe is ever made of it. The other part of the fur is a very thick and fine down, of an inch in length at moſt, and is what is commonly manufactured. In Europe, it was formerly known by the name of Muſcovia wool. This is properly the coat of the beaver, the firſt ſerving only for ornament, and perhaps to aſſiſt him in ſwimming.

It is pretended that the beaver lives fifteen or twenty years; that the female carries her young four months, and that her ordinary litter is four, though ſome travellers have raiſed it to eight, which as I believe happens but rarely. She has four teats, two on the great pectoral muſcle between the ſecond and third of the true ribs, and two about four fingers higher. The muſcles of this animal are exceeding ſtrong, and thicker in appearance than its ſize requires. Its inteſtines on the contrary are extremely ſlender, its bones very hard, and its two jaws which are almoſt equal, ſurprizingly ſtrong; each of theſe is furniſhed with ten teeth, two inciſive and eight molar. The ſuperior inciſives are two inches and a half long, the inferior upwards of three, following the bending of the jaw, which gives them a prodigious and ſurpriſing force for ſo ſmall an animal. It has been further obſerved, that the two jaws do not exactly correſpond, but that the ſuperior

rior advances conſiderably over the inferior, ſo that they croſs like the two blades of a pair of ſciſſars: Laſtly, that the length of both the one and the other is preciſely the third part of their root.

The head of the beaver is very near like that of a mountain rat. Its ſnout is pretty long, the eyes little, the ears ſhort, round, hairy on the outſide, and ſmooth within. Its legs are ſhort, particularly the forelegs, which are only four or five inches long, and pretty much like thoſe of the badger. The nails are made obliquely and hollow like quills, the hind feet are quite different, being flat and furniſhed with membranes between the toes; thus the beaver can walk though ſlowly, and ſwims with the ſame eaſe as any other aquatick animal. Beſides, in reſpect of its tail, it is altogether a fiſh, having been juridically declared ſuch by the faculty of medicine of Paris, in conſequence of which declaration, the faculty of theology have decided that it might be lawfully eaten on meagre days. M. Lemery was miſtaken in ſaying, that this deciſion regarded only the hinder part of the beaver. It has been placed all of it in the ſame claſs with mackrel.

It is true, that hitherto we have not been able to profit much by this toleration; the beavers are at preſent ſo far from our habitations, that it is rare to meet with any that are eatable. Our Indians who live among us keep it after having dried it in the ſmoke, and I give you my word, Madam, it is the worſt eating I ever taſted. It is alſo neceſſary when you have got freſh beaver, to give it a boiling in order to take away a very diſagreeable reliſh. With this precaution, it is exceeding good eating, there being no ſort of meat either lighter, more wholeſome, or more delicious, it is even affirmed to be as nouriſhing

riſhing as veal; when boiled it ſtands in need of ſome ſeaſoning to give it a reliſh, but roaſted has no need of any thing. What is moſt remarkable in this amphibious animal is its tail. This is almoſt oval, four inches broad at the root, five in the middle, and three at the extremity, I mean, however, in large beavers only. It is an inch thick, and a foot in length. Its ſubſtance is a firm fat, or tender cartilage, much like the fleſh of the porpoiſe, but which grows harder when it is kept for any conſiderable time. It is covered with a ſcaly ſkin, the ſcales of which are hexagonal, half a line in thickneſs, from three to four lines long, and reſting upon each other like thoſe of fiſhes. An extream ſlender pellicle ſerves to ſupport them, and they are indented ſo as to be eaſily ſeparated after the death of the animal.

This is in brief the deſcription of this curious creature. If you would have a ſtill greater detail of it, you may ſatisfy yourſelf by looking into the memoirs of the royal academy of ſciences for the year 1704. The anatomical deſcription of the beaver has been inſerted in it, done by M. Sarraſin correſpondent of the academy, king's phyſician in this country, and expert in medicine, anatomy, ſurgery, and botany; and a man of very fine accompliſhments, who diſtinguiſhes himſelf no leſs in the ſuperior council of which he is member, than by his abilities in every point relating to his profeſſion. It is really matter of ſurprize to find a man of ſuch univerſal merit in a colony. But to return to the beaver.

The true teſticles of this amphibious animal were not known to the antients, probably, becauſe they were very little, and lay concealed in the loins.

They

They had given this name to the bags in which the caſtoreum is contained, which are very different, and in number four in the lower belly of the beaver. The two firſt, which are called ſuperior, from their being more elevated than the reſt, are of the form of a pear, and communicate with each other like the two pockets of a knapſack. The other two which are called inferior are roundiſh towards the bottom. The former contain a ſoft, reſinous, adheſive matter, mixed with ſmall fibres, greyiſh without, and yellow within, of a ſtrong diſagreeable and penetrating ſcent, and very inflammable, which is the true caſtoreum. It hardens in the air in a month's time, and becomes brown, brittle, and friable. When they have a mind to cauſe it harden ſooner than ordinary, 'tis only placing it in a chimney.

It is pretended that the caſtoreum which comes from Dantzick is better than that of Canada; I refer it to the Druggiſts. It is certain that the bags which contain this latter are ſmaller, and that even here the largeſt are the moſt eſteemed. Beſides their thickneſs, they muſt alſo be heavy, brown, of a ſtrong penetrating ſcent, full of a hard, bitter, and friable matter, of the ſame colour, or yellowiſh interwoven with a delicate membrane, and of an acrid taſte. The properties of caſtoreum are to attenuate viſcous matter, fortify the brain, cure the vapours, provoke the menſes in women, prevent corruption, and cauſe ill humours to evaporate by perſpiration. It is alſo uſed with ſucceſs againſt the epilepſy, or falling-ſickneſs, the palſy, apoplexy, and deafneſs.

The inferior bags contain an unctuous and fattiſh liquor like honey. Its colour is of a pale yellow, its odour fetid, little different from that of the caſtoreum,

reum, but ſomewhat weaker and more diſagreeable. It thickens as it grows older, and takes the conſiſtence of tallow. This liquor is a reſolvent, and a fortifier of the nerves, for which purpoſe it muſt be applied upon the part. It is beſides a folly to ſay with ſome authors on the faith of the antient naturaliſts, that when the beaver finds himſelf purſued, to ſave his life he bites off theſe pretended teſticles which he abandons to the hunters. It is his fur he ought then to ſtrip himſelf of, in compariſon of which all the reſt is of little value. It is, however, owing to this fable that this animal got the name of Caſtor. Its ſkin, after being ſtript of the fur, is not to be neglected; of it are made gloves and ſtockings, as might ſeveral other things, but it being difficult to take off all the fur without cutting it they make uſe of the ſkin of the land beaver.

You have, perhaps, heard of green and dry beaver, and you may alſo be deſirous to know the difference; which is this. The dry beaver is its ſkin before it has been employed in any uſe: the green beaver are ſuch as have been worn by the Indians, who, after having well tawed them on the inſide, and rubbed them with the marrow of certain animals, with which I am not acquainted, in order to render them more pliant, ſew ſeveral of them together, making a ſort of garment, which they call a robe, and in which they wrap themſelves with the fur inwards. They never put it off in winter, day nor night; the long hair ſoon falls off, the down remaining and becoming more oily, in which condition it is much fitter to be worked up by the hatters; who cannot make any uſe of the dry, without a mixture of this fat fur along with it. They pretend it ought to have been worn from fifteen to eighteen months to be in its perfection. I leave you

to

to judge whether our firſt traders were ſimple enough to let the Indians know what a valuable commodity their old cloaths were. It was, however, impoſſible to keep a ſecret of this nature for any conſiderable time, being entruſted to a paſſion which immediately betrays itſelf. About thirty years ago one Guigues, who had had the farm of the beaver, finding a prodigious quantity of this fur upon his hands, bethought himſelf, in order to create a vent for it, of having it ſpun and carded with wool, and of this compoſition he cauſed make cloths, flannels, ſtocking, and other ſuch like manufactures, but with ſmall ſucceſs. This trial ſhewed that the fur of the beaver was only fit for making hats. It is too ſhort to be capable of being ſpun alone, and a great deal more than one half muſt conſiſt of wool, ſo that there is very little profit to be made by this manufacture. There is, however, one of this ſort ſtill kept up in Holland, where you meet with cloaths and druggets of it; but theſe ſtuffs come dear, and beſides do not wear well. The beaver wool very ſoon leaves it, forming on the ſurface a ſort of nap which deſtroys all its luſtre. The ſtockings which have been made of it in France had the ſame defect.

Theſe, Madam, are all the advantages the beavers are capable of affording the commerce of this colony: their foreſight, their unanimity, and that wonderful ſubordination we ſo much admire in them, their attention to provide conveniencies, of which we could not before imagine brutes capable of perceiving the advantages, afford mankind ſtill more important leſſons, than the ant to whom the holy ſcripture ſends the ſluggard. They are at leaſt amongſt the quadrupeds, what the bees are amongſt winged inſects. I have not heard perſons well informed

formed ſay, that they have a king or queen, and it is not true, that when they are at work in a body, there is a chief or a leader who gives orders and puniſhes the ſlothful; but by virtue of that inſtinct which this animal has from him, whoſe Providence governs them, every one knows his own proper office, and every thing is done without confuſion, and in the moſt admirable order. Perhaps, after all, the reaſon why we are ſo ſtruck with it is for want of having recourſe to that ſovereign intelligence, who makes uſe of creatures void of reaſon, the better to diſplay his wiſdom and power, and to make us ſenſible that our reaſon itſelf is almoſt always, through our preſumption, the cauſe of our miſtakes.

The firſt thing which our ingenious brutes do, when they are about to chuſe a habitation, is to call an aſſembly if you pleaſe, of the ſtates of the province. However this be, there are ſometimes three or four hundred of them together in one place, forming a town which might properly enough be called a little Venice. Firſt of all they pitch upon a ſpot where there are plenty of proviſions, with all the materials neceſſary for building. Above all things water is abſolutely neceſſary, and in caſe they can find neither lake nor pool, they ſupply that defect by ſtopping the courſe of ſome rivulet, or of ſome ſmall river, by means of a dyke, or to ſpeak in the language of this country, of a cauſeway. For this purpoſe, they ſet about felling of trees, but higher than the place where they have reſolved to build; three or four beavers place themſelves round ſome great tree, and find ways and means to lay it along the ground with their teeth. This is not all; they take their meaſures ſo well, that it always falls towards the water, to the end they may have

have leſs way to drag it, after cutting it into proper lengths. They have afterwards only to roll thoſe pieces ſo cut towards the water, where, after they have been launched, they navigate them towards the place where they are to be employed.

Theſe pieces are more or leſs thick or long, according as the nature and ſituation of the place require, for theſe architects foreſee every thing. Sometimes they make uſe of the trunks of great trees, which they place in a flat direction; ſometimes the cauſeway conſiſts of piles nearly as thick as one's thigh, ſupported by ſtrong ſtakes, and interwoven with ſmall branches; and every where the vacant ſpaces are filled with a fat earth ſo well applied, that not a drop of water paſſes through. The beavers prepare this earth with their feet; and their tail not only ſerves inſtead of a trowel for building; but alſo ſerves them inſtead of a wheelbarrow for tranſporting this mortar, which is performed by trailing themſelves along on their hinder feet. When they have arrived at the water-ſide, they take it up with their teeth, and apply it firſt with their feet, and then plaiſter it with their tail. The foundations of theſe dykes are commonly ten or twelve feet thick, diminiſhing always upward, till at laſt they come to two or three; the ſtricteſt proportion is always exactly obſerved; the rule and the compaſs are in the eye of the great maſter of arts and ſciences. Laſtly, it has been obſerved, that the ſide towards the current of the water is always made ſloping, and the other ſide quite upright. In a word, it would be difficult for our beſt workmen to build any thing either more ſolid or more regular.

The conſtruction of the cabins is no leſs wonderful. Theſe are generally built on piles in the mid-

middle of thoſe ſmall lakes formed by the dykes; ſometimes on the bank of a river, or at the extremity of ſome point advancing into the water. Their figure is round or oval, and their roofs are arched like the bottom of a baſket. Their partitions are two feet thick, the materials of them being the ſame, though leſs ſubſtantial, than thoſe in the cauſeways; and all is ſo well plaiſtered with clay in the inſide, that not the ſmalleſt breath of air can enter. Two thirds of the edifice ſtands above water, and in this part each beaver has his place aſſigned him, which he takes care to floor with leaves or ſmall branches of pine-trees. There is never any ordure to be ſeen here, and to this end, beſides the common gate of the cabin and another iſſue by which theſe animals go out to bathe, there are ſeveral openings by which they diſcharge their excrements into the water. The common cabins lodge eight or ten beavers, and ſome have been known to contain thirty, but this is rarely ſeen. All of them are near enough to have an eaſy communication with each other.

The winter never ſurprizes the beavers. All the works I have been mentioning are finiſhed by the end of September, when every one lays in his winter-ſtock of proviſions. Whilſt their buſineſs leads them abroad into the country or woods, they live upon the fruit, bark, and leaves of trees; they fiſh alſo for crawfiſh and ſome other kinds; every thing is then at the beſt. But when the buſineſs is to lay in a ſtore, ſufficient to laſt them, whilſt the earth is hid under the ſnow, they put up with wood of a ſoft texture, ſuch as poplars, aſpens, and other ſuch like trees. Theſe they lay up in piles, and diſpoſe in ſuch wiſe, as to be always able to come at the pieces which have been ſoftened in the water. It has

been conſtantly remarked, that theſe piles are more or leſs large, according as the winter is to be longer or ſhorter, which ſerves as an Almanack to the Indians, who are never miſtaken with reſpect to the duration of the cold. The beavers before they eat the wood, cut it into ſmall ſlender pieces, and carry it into their apartment; each cabin having only one ſtore-room for the whole family.

When the melting of the ſnow is at its greateſt height as it never fails to occaſion great inundations, the beavers quit their cabins which are no longer habitable, every one ſhifting for himſelf as well as he can. The females return thither as ſoon as the waters are fallen, and it is then they bring forth their young. The males keep abroad till towards the month of July, when they re-aſſemble, in order to repair the breaches which the ſwelling of the waters may have made in their cabbins or dykes. In caſe theſe have been deſtroyed by the hunters, or provided they are not worth the trouble of repairing them, they ſet about building of others; but they are often obliged to change the place of their abode, and that for many reaſons. The moſt common is for want of proviſions; they are alſo driven out by the hunters, or by carnivorous animals, againſt whom they have no other defence than flight alone. One might reaſonably wonder, that the author of nature ſhould have given a leſs ſhare of ſtrength to the moſt part of uſeful animals than to ſuch as are not ſo; if this very thing did not make a brighter diſplay of his power and wiſdom, in cauſing the former, notwithſtanding their weakneſs to multiply much faſter than the latter.

There are places to which the beavers ſeem to have ſo ſtrong a liking that they can never leave them

them though they are conſtantly diſturbed in them. On the way from Montreal to Lake Huron, by way of the great river, is conſtantly found every year a neſt which thoſe animals build or repair every ſummer; for the firſt thing which thoſe travellers, who arrive firſt do, is to break down the cabin and dyke which ſupplies it with water. Had not this cauſeway dammed up the water, there would not have been ſufficient to continue their voyages, ſo that of neceſſity there muſt have been a carrying-place; ſo that it ſeems thoſe officious beavers poſt themſelves there entirely for the conveniency of paſſengers.

The Indians were formerly of opinion, if we may believe ſome accounts, that the beavers were a ſpecies of animals endued with reaſon, which had a government, laws, and language of their own; that this amphibious commonwealth choſe chiefs or officers, who in the publick works aſſigned to each his taſk, placed ſentries to give the alarm at the approach of an enemy, and who puniſhed the lazy corporally, or with exile. Thoſe pretended exiles are ſuch as are probably called land beavers, who actually live ſeparate from the others, never work, and live under-ground, where their ſole buſineſs is to make themſelves a covered way to the water. They are known by the ſmall quantity of fur on their backs, proceeding, without doubt from their rubbing themſelves continually againſt the ground. And beſides, they are lean, which is the conſequence of their lazineſs; they are found in much greater plenty in warm than in cold countries. I have already taken notice that our European beavers are much liker theſe laſt than the others; and Lemery actually ſays, that they retire into holes and caverns on the banks of rivers, and eſpecially in Poland. There are

alſo ſome of them in Germany, along the ſhores of the Ebro in Spain, and on the Rhone, the Iſer, and the Oiſe in France. What is certain is, that we ſee not ſo much of the marvellous in the European beavers, for which thoſe of Canada are ſo highly diſtinguiſhed. Your ladyſhip will certainly agree with me, that it is great pity, none of theſe wonderful creatures were ever found either on the Tiber or on Parnaſſus; how many fine things would they have given occaſion to the Greek and Roman poets to ſay on that ſubject.

It appears, that the Indians of Canada did not give them much diſturbance before our arrival in their country. The ſkins of the beaver were not uſed by thoſe people by way of garments, and the fleſh of bears, elks, and ſome other wild beaſts, ſeemed, in all probability, preferable to that of the beaver. They were, however, in uſe to hunt them, and this hunting had both its ſeaſon and ceremonial fixed; but when people hunt only out of neceſſity, and when this is confined to pure neceſſaries, there is no great havock made; thus when we arrived in Canada we found a prodigious number of theſe creatures in it.

The hunting of the beaver is not difficult; this animal ſhewing not near ſo much ſtrength in defending himſelf, or dexterity in ſhunning the ſnares of his enemies, as he diſcovers induſtry in providing himſelf good lodgings, and foreſight in getting all the neceſſaries of life. It is during the winter that war is carried on againſt him in form; that is to ſay, from the beginning of November to the month of April. At that time, like moſt other animals, he has the greateſt quantity of fur, and his ſkin is thinneſt. This hunting is performed four ways, with

with nets, by lying upon the watch, by opening the ice, and with gins. The firſt and third are generally joined together; the ſecond way is ſeldom made uſe of; the little eyes of this animal being ſo ſharp, and its hearing ſo acute, that it is difficult to get within ſhot of it, before it gains the water-ſide, from which it never goes far at this time of the year, and in which it dives immediately. It would even be loſt after being wounded, in caſe it is able to reach the water, for when mortally wounded it never comes up again. The two laſt manners are therefore moſt generally practiſed.

Though the beavers lay up their winter proviſion, they notwithſtanding from time to time make ſome excurſions into the woods in queſt of freſher and more tender food, which delicacy of theirs ſometimes coſts them their lives. The Indians lay traps in their way made nearly in the form of the figure 4, and for a bait place ſmall bits of tender wood newly cut. The beaver no ſooner touches it, than a large log falls upon his body, which breaks his back, when the hunter, coming up, eaſily diſpatches him. The method by opening the ice requires more precaution, and is done in this manner. When the ice is yet but half a foot in thickneſs, an opening is made with a hatchet; thither the beavers come for a ſupply of freſh air; the hunters watch for them at the hole, and perceive them coming at a great diſtance, their breath occaſioning a conſiderable motion in the water; thus it is eaſy for them to take their meaſures for knocking them in the head the moment they raiſe it above water. In order to make ſure of their game, and to prevent their being perceived by the beavers, they cover the hole with the leaves of reeds, and of the plant *Typha*, and after they underſtand that the animal is

within reach, they ſeize him by one of his legs, throw him upon the ice, and diſpatch him before he recovers from his conſternation.

When their cabin happens to be near ſome rivulet, the hunting of the beaver is ſtill more eaſy. They cut the ice croſs-wiſe, in order to ſpread a net under it; they afterwards break down the cabin. The beavers that are within it, never fail to make towards the rivulet, where they are taken in the net. But they muſt not be ſuffered to remain in it for any time, as they would very ſoon extricate themſelves, by cutting it with their teeth. Thoſe whoſe cabins are in lakes, have, at the diſtance of three or four hundred paces from the water-ſide, a kind of country houſe for the benefit of the air; in hunting of theſe the huntſmen divide into two bodies, one breaks the houſe in the country, whilſt the other falls upon that in the lake; the beavers which are in this laſt, and they pitch upon the time when they are all at home, run for ſanctuary to the other, where they find themſelves bewildered in a cloud of duſt, which has been raiſed on purpoſe, and which blinds them ſo, that they are ſubdued with eaſe. Laſtly, in ſome places, they content themſelves with making an opening in their cauſeways; by this means, the beavers find themſelves ſoon on dry ground; ſo that they remain without defence; or elſe they run to put ſome remedy to the diſorder, the cauſe of which is as yet unknown to them; and as the hunters are ready to receive them, it is rare that they fail, or at leaſt that they return empty-handed.

There are ſeveral other particularities with reſpect to the beavers, which I find in ſome memoirs, the truth of which I will not take upon me to maintain.

tain. It is pretended, that when theſe animals have diſcovered hunters, or any of thoſe beaſts of prey which make war on them, they dive to the bottom, beating the water with their tails with ſo prodigious a noiſe, as to be heard at the diſtance of half a league. This is probably to warn the reſt to be upon their guard. It is ſaid alſo, that they are of ſo quick a ſcent, that when they are in the water they will perceive a canoe at a great diſtance. But they add, that they ſee only ſide-ways like the hares, which defect often delivers them into the hands of the hunters, whom they would endeavour to avoid. Laſtly, it is aſſerted, that when the beaver has loſt his mate, he never couples with another, as is related of the turtle.

The Indians take great care to hinder their dogs from touching the bones of the beaver, they being ſo very hard as to ſpoil their teeth. The ſame thing is ſaid of the bones of the porcupine. The common run of theſe barbarians give another reaſon for this precaution, which is, ſay they, for fear of irritating the ſpirits of thoſe animals, which might render their hunting unproſperous another time. But I am inclined to be of opinion, that this reaſon was found out after the practice was eſtabliſhed; for thus has ſuperſtition uſurped the place of natural cauſes to the ſhame of human underſtanding. I moreover wonder, Madam, that no attempt has hitherto been made to tranſport to France ſome of theſe wonderful creatures; we have many places where they might find every thing proper for building and ſubſiſtence, and I am of opinion they would multiply greatly in a ſhort time.

We have alſo in this country a little animal of much the ſame nature with the beaver, and which on many accounts appears to be a diminutive of it, called the *Muſk-rat*. This has almoſt all the properties of the beaver; the ſtructure of the body, and eſpecially of the head, is ſo very like, that we ſhould be apt to take the muſk-rat for a ſmall beaver, were his tail only cut off, in which he differs little from the common European rat; and were it not for his teſticles, which contain a moſt exquiſite muſk. This animal, which weighs about four pounds, is pretty like that which Ray ſpeaks of under the name of the *Mus Alpinus*. He takes the field in March, at which time his food conſiſts of bits of wood, which he peels before he eats them. After the diſſolving of the ſnows he lives upon the roots of nettles, and afterwards on the ſtalks and leaves of that plant. In ſummer he lives on ſtrawberries and raſberries, which ſucceed the other fruits of the Autumn. During all this time you rarely ſee the male and female aſunder.

At the approach of winter they ſeparate, when each takes up his lodgings apart by himſelf in ſome hole, or in the hollow of a tree, without any proviſion, and the Indians aſſure us, that they eat not the leaſt morſel of any thing whilſt the cold continues. They likewiſe build cabins nearly in the form of thoſe of the beavers, but far from being ſo well executed. As to their place of abode, it is always by the water-ſide, ſo that they have no need to build cauſeways. It is ſaid, that the fur of the muſk-rat is uſed in the manufacture of hats, along with that of the beaver, without any diſadvantage. Its fleſh is tolerable good eating, except in time of rut, at which ſeaſon it is impoſſible to cure it of a

reliſh

reliſh of muſk, which is far from being as agreeable to the taſte, as it is to the ſcent. I was very much diſpoſed to give your Grace an account of the other kinds of hunting practiſed amongſt our Indians, and of the animals which are peculiar to this country; but I am obliged to refer this part to ſome other opportunity, as I am this moment told that my carriage is ready.

*I am*, &c.

LETTER

# LETTER VI.

*Voyage from* Quebec *to the* Three Rivers. *Of riding poſt on the ſnow. Of the lordſhips of* New France. *Deſcription of* Beckancourt. *Tradition with reſpect to the origin of the name of the* Stinking River. *Deſcription of the* Three Rivers. *Sequel of the huntings of the* Indians.

*Three Rivers, March* 6, 1721.

*Madam,*

I Arrived yeſterday in this town, after a journey of two days, and though it is twenty-five leagues diſtant from Quebec, I could very eaſily have travelled the whole of it in twelve hours, as I took the way of a *Combiatura*, which the ſnow and ice render exceeding eaſy in this country in the winter ſeaſon, and as it is full as cheap as the common way of travelling. They make uſe of a ſledge for this purpoſe, or of what the French here call a *Cariole*, which glides ſo ſmoothly, that one horſe is enough to draw it at full gallop, which is their ordinary pace. They frequently change horſes and have them very cheap. In caſe of neceſſity, one might travel this way ſixty leagues in twenty four hours

hours, and much more commodiouſly than in the beſt poſt-chaiſe in the world.

I lay the firſt night at *Pointe aux Trembles*, ſeven leagues from the capital, from whence I ſet out at eleven at night. This is one of the better ſort of pariſhes in this country. The church is large and well-built, and the inhabitants are in very good circumſtances. In ſeveral the ancient planters are richer than the lords of the manors, the reaſon of which is this: Canada was only a vaſt foreſt when the French firſt ſettled in it. Thoſe to whom lordſhips were given, were not proper perſons to cultivate them themſelves. They were officers, gentlemen, or communities, who had not funds ſufficient to procure and maintain the neceſſary number of workmen upon them. It was therefore neceſſary to ſettle and plant them with inhabitants, who, before they could raiſe what was ſufficient to maintain them, were obliged to labour hard, and even to lay out all the advances of money. Thus they held of the lords at a very ſlender quit-rent, ſo that with fines of alienation, which were here very ſmall, and what is called the *Droit du moulin & Metairie*, a lordſhip of two leagues in front, and of an unlimited depth, yields no great revenue in a country ſo thinly peopled, and with ſo little inland trade.

This was no doubt one reaſon, which induced the late King Lewis XIV. to permit all noblemen and gentlemen, ſettled in Canada, to exerciſe commerce as well by ſea as land, without queſtion, interruption, or derogating from their quality and rights. Theſe are the terms of the arrêt, paſſed by the council ôn the 10th of March, 1685. Moreover, there are in this country, no lordſhips, even amongſt thoſe which give titles, who have right of

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patronage; for on the pretenſion of ſome lords, founded on their having built the pariſh church, his majeſty in council, pronounced the ſame year 1685, that this right belonged to the biſhop alone, as well becauſe he ought to be better able to judge of the capacity of the candidates, than any other perſon, as becauſe the ſalaries of the curates are paid out of the tithes, which belong to the biſhop. The king in the ſame arrêt further declares, that the right of patronage is not deemed honorary.

I ſet out from *Pointe aux Trembles* on the fourth, before day-break, with a horſe blind of an eye, which I afterwards exchanged for a lame one, and this again for one that was broken-winded. With theſe three relays, I travelled ſeventeen leagues in ſeven or eight hours, and arrived early at the houſe of the baron de Beckancourt, grand-maſter, or inſpector of the highways of Canada, who would not ſuffer me to go any farther. This gentleman too has a village of Abenaquiſe Indians on his lands, which is governed in ſpiritual matters by a Jeſuit, to whom I gladly paid my reſpects as I paſſed. The baron lives at the mouth of a little river which comes from the ſouth, and whoſe whole courſe is within his eſtate, which is alſo known by his own name. It is not however this large tract which has been erected into a barony, but that on the other ſide of the river.

The life M. de Beckancourt leads in this deſart, there being as yet no inhabitant in it beſides the lord, recalls naturally enough the way of living of the ancient patriarchs to our memory, who were not above putting their hands to work with their ſervants in country-work, and lived almoſt in the ſame ſobriety and temperance with them. The profit to be made by trading with the Indians in his neigh-

neighbourhood, by buying furs at the firſt-hand, is well worth all the quit-rents he could receive from any planters to whom he could have parcelled out his lands. In time it will be in his own option to have vaſſals, when he may have much better terms, after having firſt cleared all his eſtate. The river of Beckancourt was formerly called the Stinking-River: I acquainted myſelf with the occaſion of this name, as the water of it appeared to be clear and excellent in other reſpects, which was alſo confirmed by others, and that there was no ſuch thing as a diſagreeable ſcent in the whole country, I was however, told by others, that this name was owing to the bad quality of the waters; others again attributed it to the great quantity of muſk-rats found on it, the ſmell of which is intolerable to an Indian; a third account, and which is related by ſuch as have made deeper reſearches into the ancient hiſtory of the country, and which is therefore pretended to be the true one, is as follows.

Some Algonquins, being at war with the Onnontcharonnons, better known by the name of the nation of the Iroquet, and whoſe ancient abode was, ſay they, in the iſland of Montreal. The name they bear proves them to be of the Huron language; notwithſtanding, it is pretended that the Hurons were they who drove them from their ancient reſidence, and who have even in part deſtroyed them. Be this as it will, they were, at the time I have been mentioning, at war with the Algonquins, who, to put an end to the war, they began to be weary of, at one blow, bethought themſelves of a ſtratagem which ſucceeded according to their wiſhes. They took the field, by occupying both ſides of the little river, now called the river of Beckancourt. They afterwards detached ſome canoes, the crews of which feigned

feigned as if they were fiſhing in the river. They knew their enemies were at no great diſtance, and made no doubt they would immediately fall upon the pretended fiſhers; in fact, they ſoon fell upon them with a large fleet of canoes, when they again counterfeiting fear, took to flight and gained the banks of the river. They were followed cloſe by the enemy, who made ſure of deſtroying an handful of men, who to draw them the deeper into the ſnare, affected an extraordinary panick. This feint ſucceeded; the purſuers continued to advance, and as the cuſtom is of thoſe barbarians raiſing a moſt horrible ſhouting, they imagined they had now nothing to do, but to launch forth and ſeize their prey.

At the ſame inſtant, a ſhower of arrows diſcharged from behind the buſhes, which lined the river, threw them into a confuſion, from which they were not ſuffered to recover. A ſecond diſcharge, which followed cloſe upon the firſt, compleated the rout. They wanted to fly in their turn, but could no longer make uſe of their canoes, which were bored on all ſides. They plunged into the water, in hopes of eſcaping that way, but beſides, that moſt of them were wounded, they found, on reaching the ſhore, the fate they ſought to ſhun, ſo that not a ſoul eſcaped the Algonquins, who gave no quarter, nor made any priſoners. The nation of the Iroquet have never recovered this check, and though ſome of theſe Indians have been ſeen ſince the arrival ofthe French in Canada, there is now no doubt of their having been entirely deſtroyed long ſince. However, the number of dead bodies, which remained in the water, and on the banks of the river, infected it to ſuch a degree, that it has kept the name of the Stinking-River ever ſince.

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The Abenaquiſe town of Beckancourt is not now ſo populous as formerly. They would, certainly, for all that, be of great ſervice to us in caſe a war ſhould happen to break out. Theſe Indians are the beſt partiſans in the whole country, and are always very ready to make inroads into New-England, where the name of them has thrown terror even into Boſton itſelf. They would be equally ſerviceable to us againſt the Iroquois, to whom they are nothing inferior in bravery, and whom they much ſurpaſs in point of diſcipline. They are all Chriſtians, and an handſome chapel has been built for them, where they practiſe with much edification, all the duties of Chriſtian devotion. It muſt, however, be acknowledged, that their fervour is not ſo conſpicuous as formerly when they firſt ſettled among us. Since that time, they have been made acquainted with the uſe of ſpirituous liquors, which they have taken a taſte to, and of which no Indian ever drinks but on purpoſe to intoxicate himſelf; notwithſtanding, fatal experience has taught us, that in proportion as men deviate from their duty to God, the leſs regard do they entertain for their perſons, and the nearer do they draw to the Engliſh. It is much to be feared the Lord ſhould permit them to become enemies to us, to puniſh us for having contributed thereto, from motives of ſordid intereſt, and for having helped to make them vicious as has already happened to ſome nations.

After embracing the miſſionary at Beckancourt, viſiting his canton, and making with him melancholy reflections on the inevitable conſequences of this diſorder I have been mentioning, and for which he is often under the neceſſity of making his moan before the Lord; I croſſed the river St. Lawrence, in order to get to this town. Nothing, Madam, can poſ-

poſſibly exceed the delightfulneſs of its ſituation. It is built on a ſandy declivity, on which there is juſt barren ground ſufficient to contain the town, if ever it come to be a large place; for at preſent it is far from being conſiderable. It is, moreover, ſurrounded with every thing that can contribute to render a place at once rich and pleaſant. The river, which is near half a league over, waſhes its foundations. Beyond this you ſee nothing but cultivated lands, and thoſe extremely fertile, and crowned with the nobleſt foreſts in the univerſe. A little below, and on the ſame ſide with the town, the St. Lawrence receives a fine river, which juſt before it pays the tribute of its own waters, receives thoſe of two others, one on the right, and the other on the left, from whence this place has the name of the Three Rivers.

Above, and almoſt at an equal diſtance, lake St. Peter begins, which is about three leagues broad and ſeven long. Thus there is nothing to confine the proſpect on that ſide, and the ſun ſeems to ſet in the water. This lake, which is no more than a widening of the river, receives ſeveral rivers. It is probable enough that theſe rivers have, in a courſe of years, worn away the low moving earth on which they flowed; this is very ſenſible with reſpect to lake St. Francis, in the mouth of which are ſeveral iſlands, which might have formerly been joined to the Continent. Beſides, over all the lake, except in the middle of the channel, which is kept at its full depth by the force of the current, there is no ſailing except in canoes, and there are even ſome places, where large canoes, ever ſo little loaded, cannot eaſily paſs; to make amends, it is every where well ſtored with fiſh, and that too of the moſt excellent ſorts.

They reckon but about ſeven or eight hundred ſouls on the Three Rivers; but it has in its neighbourhood ſufficient wherewithal to enrich a great city. There is exceeding plentiful iron mines, which may be made to turn to account whenever it is judged proper *. However, notwithſtanding the ſmall number of inhabitants in this place, its ſituation renders it of vaſt importance, and it is alſo one of the moſt ancient eſtabliſhments in the colony. This poſt has always, even from the moſt early times, had a governor. He has a thouſand crowns ſalary, with an *Etat Major*. Here is a convent of Recollets; a very fine pariſh church, where the ſame fathers officiate, and a noble hoſpital adjoining to a convent of Urſuline nuns, to the number of forty, who ſerve the hoſpital. This is alſo a foundation of M. de St. Vallier. As early as the year 1650, the ſeneſchal or high ſteward of New France, whoſe juriſdiction was abſorbed in that of the ſupreme council of Quebec, and of the intendant, had a lieutenant at the Three Rivers; at this day this city has an ordinary tribunal for criminal matters, the chief of which is a lieutenant-general.

This city owes its origin to the great concourſe of Indians, of different nations, at this place in the beginning of the colony. There reſorted to it chiefly ſeveral from the moſt diſtant quarters of the north by way of the Three Rivers, which have given this city its name, and which are navigable a great way upwards. The ſituation of the place joined to the great trade carried on at it, induced ſome French to ſettle here, and the nearneſs of the river Sorel, then called the Iroquois river, and of which I ſhall ſoon take notice, obliged the governors-general to

* They are now actually working them, and they produce ſome of the beſt iron in the world.

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build a Fort here, where they kept a good garriſon, and which at firſt had a governor of its own. Thus this poſt was henceforwards looked upon as one of the moſt important places in New France. After ſome years the Indians, weary of the continual ravages of the Iroquois, and from whom the French themſelves had enough to do to defend themſelves, and the paſſes being no longer free in which thoſe Indians lay in ambuſh, and finding themſelves hardly ſecure, even under the cannon of our fort, they left off bringing their furs. The jeſuits, with all the new converts they could gather, retired to a place three leagues below, which had been given them by the Abbé de la Madeleine, one of the members of the company of the Hundred Aſſociates, erected by cardinal Richelieu, from whence this ſpot had the name of Cap de la Madeleine, which it ſtill bears *.

The miſſion tranſported thither did not however ſubſiſt long. This is partly the effect of the levity natural to the Indians, but chiefly to a ſeries of wars and diſeaſes, which have almoſt wholly deſtroyed this infant church. You find, however, in the neighbourhood a company of Algonquins, moſt of whom have been baptiſed in their infancy, but have no outward exerciſe of religion. The members of the Weſt-India Company, who have at preſent the farm of the beaver-trade, have in vain attempted to draw them to Checontini, where they have already re-aſſembled ſeveral families of the ſame nation, and of the Montagnez, under the direction of a jeſuit miſſionary. Some others were for uniting them with the Abenaquis of St. Francis. All the anſwer they made to theſe invitations was,

* Beſides the iron mines which are pretty rich at Cap de la Madeleine, they have alſo ſome years ſince diſcovered ſeveral ſprings of mineral water, of the ſame quality with thoſe of Forges.

that they could not think of abandoning a place where the bones of their forefathers were depoſited ; but ſome believe, and not without grounds, that this oppoſition is leſs owing to them, than to ſome perſons who reap advantages from their nearneſs to them, and who, certainly do not reflect to what a contemptible conſideration they poſtpone the ſalvation of thoſe Indians.

I have been juſt told, that ſome days hence there will be an opportunity of ſending this letter to Quebec, from whence it may ſoon reach France by way of the Royal Iſland. I will fill up the remaining ſpace with what relates to the huntings of the Indians ; that of the beaver, as I have already remarked, was not conſidered as a principal object, till they ſaw the value we ſet upon the ſpoils of this animal. Before this, the bear held the firſt rank with them, and here too ſuperſtition had the greateſt ſhare. The following is what is practiſed at this day, among thoſe who are not Chriſtians, in the hunting of this animal.

It is always ſome war-chief who fixes the time of it, and who takes care to invite the hunters. This invitation, which is made with great ceremony, is followed by a faſt of ten days continuance, during which it is unlawful to taſte ſo much as a drop of water ; and I muſt tell your Grace, by the way, that what the Indians call faſting, is wholly abſtaining from every ſort of food or drink ; nay more, in ſpite of the extreme weakneſs to which they are of neceſſity reduced by ſo ſevere a faſt, they are always ſinging the live long day. The reaſon of this faſt, is to induce the ſpirits to diſcover the place where a great number of bears may be found. Several even go a great way farther to obtain this

grace. Some have been ſeen to cut their fleſh in ſeveral parts of the body, in order to render their genii propitious. But it is proper to know, that they never implore their ſuccour to enable them to conquer thoſe furious animals, but are contented with knowing where they lie. Thus Ajax did not pray to Jupiter to enable him to overcome his enemies, but only day-light enough to compleat the victory.

The Indians addreſs their vows for the ſame reaſon to the manes of the beaſts they have killed in their former huntings, and as their minds are wholly intent on ſuch thoughts whilſt they are awake, it is but natural they ſhould often dream of bears in their ſleep, which can never be very ſound with ſuch empty ſtomachs; but neither is this enough to determine them: it is likewiſe neceſſary, that all, or at leaſt the greateſt part of thoſe who are to be of the party, ſhould alſo ſee bears, and in the ſame canton; now how is it poſſible ſo many dreamers ſhould agree in this point? However, provided ſome expert hunter dream twice or thrice an end of ſeeing bears in a certain fixed place, whether it be the effect of complaiſance, for nothing can be more ſo than the Indians, or whether it is by dint of hearing the affair ſpoke of, their empty brains at laſt take the impreſſion, every one ſoon falls a dreaming, or at leaſt pretends ſo to do, when they determine to ſet out for that place. The faſt ended, and the place of hunting fixed, the chief who is appointed to conduct it, gives a grand repaſt to all who are to be of the party, and no one dares preſume to come to it, till he has firſt bathed, that is to ſay, waſhed himſelf in the river, be the weather ever ſo ſevere, provided it is not frozen. This feaſt, is not like many others, where they are

obliged to eat up every thing; though they have had a long faſt, and perhaps, on this very account, they obſerve great ſobriety in eating. He who does the honours, touches nothing, and his whole employment, whilſt the reſt are at table, is to rehearſe his ancient feats of hunting. The feaſt concludes with new invocations of the ſpirits of the departed bears. They afterwards ſet out on their march bedawbed with black, and equipped as if for war, amidſt the acclamations of the whole village. Thus hunting is no leſs noble amongſt theſe nations than war; and the alliance of a good hunter is even more courted than that of a famous warriour, as hunting furniſhes the whole family with food and raiment, beyond which the Indians never extend their care. But no one is deemed a great hunter, except he has killed twelve large beaſts in one day.

Theſe people have two great advantages over us in reſpect to this exerciſe; for in the firſt place, nothing ſtops them, neither thickets, nor ditches, nor torrents, nor pools, nor rivers. They go always ſtrait forwards in the directeſt line poſſible. In the ſecond place, there are few or perhaps no animals which they will not overtake by ſpeed of foot. Some have been ſeen, ſay they, arriving in the village driving a parcel of bears with a ſwitch, like a flock of ſheep; and the nimbleſt deer is not more ſo than they. Beſides the hunter himſelf reaps very little benefit by his ſucceſs; he is obliged to make large preſents, and even if they prevent him by taking it at their own hand from him, he muſt ſee himſelf robbed without complaining, and remain ſatisfied with the glory of having laboured for the publick. It is, however, allowed him in the diſtribution of what he has caught, to begin with his own

family. But it muſt be acknowledged, that thoſe with whom we have the moſt commerce, have already loſt ſomewhat of this ancient generoſity, and of this admirable diſintereſtedneſs. Nothing is more contagious than a ſelfiſh and intereſted ſpirit, and nothing is more capable of corrupting the morals.

The ſeaſon of hunting the bear is in winter. Theſe animals are then concealed in the hollow trunks of trees, in which if they happen to fall they make themſelves a den with their roots, the entry of which they ſtop with pine branches, by which means they are perfectly well ſheltered from all the inclemencies of the weather. If all this is ſtill inſufficient, they make a hole in the ground, taking great care to ſtop the mouth well when once they are entered. Some have been ſeen couched in the bottom of their dens, ſo as to be hardly perceivable, even when examined very nearly. But in whatever manner the bear is lodged, he never once quits his apartments all the winter; this is a circumſtance paſt all manner of doubt. It is no leſs certain, that he lays up no manner of proviſion, and conſequently that he muſt of neceſſity live all that while without taſting food or drink, and that as ſome have advanced his ſole nouriſhment is the licking his paws; but with reſpect to this particular, every one is at liberty to believe as he pleaſes. What is certain, is, that ſome of them have been kept chained for a whole winter, without having the leaſt morſel of food, or any drink given them, and at the end of ſix months, they have been found as fat as in the beginning. It is no doubt ſurpriſing enough, that an animal, provided of ſo warm a fur, and which is far from having a delicate appearance, ſhould take more precautions againſt the cold than any other. This may ſerve to convince

us, that we ought never to form our judgment of things by appearance, and that every one is the beſt judge of his own wants.

There is therefore but little courſing neceſſary to catch the bear; the point is only to find his burrow, and the places which they haunt. When the huntſmen imagine they have come near ſuch a place, they form themſelves into a large circle, a quarter of a league in circumference, more or leſs, according to the number of ſportſmen; they then move onwards, drawing nearer and nearer, every one trying as he advances to diſcover the retreat of ſome bear. By this means, if there are any at all in this ſpace, they are certain of diſcovering them, for our Indians are excellent ferrets. Next day they go to work in the ſame manner, and continue ſo to do all the time the hunting laſts.

As ſoon as a bear is killed, the huntſman places his lighted pipe in his mouth, and blows the beaſts throat and windpipe full of the ſmoke, at the ſame time conjuring his ſpirit to hold no reſentment for the inſult done his body, and to be propitious to him in his future huntings. But as the ſpirit makes no anſwer, the huntſmen to know whether his prayers have been heard, cuts off the membrane under his tongue, which he keeps till his return to the village, when every one throws his own membranes into the fire, after many invocations, and abundance of ceremony. If theſe happen to crackle and ſhrivel up, and it can hardly be otherwiſe, it is looked upon as a certain ſign, that the manes of the bears are appeaſed; if otherwiſe, they imagine the departed bears are wroth with them, and that next year's hunting will be unproſperous, at leaſt till ſome

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means are found of reconciling them, for they have a remedy for every thing.

The hunters make good cheer whilſt the hunting laſts, and, if it is ever ſo little ſucceſsful, bring home ſufficient to regale their friends, and to maintain their families a long time. To ſee the reception given them, the praiſes with which they are loaded, and their own air of ſelf-ſatisfaction and applauſe, you would imagine them returning from ſome important expedition, loaden with the ſpoils of a conquered enemy. One muſt be a man indeed, ſay they to them, and they even ſpeak ſo of themſelves, thus to combat and overcome bears. Another particular, which occaſions them no leſs eulogiums, and which adds equally to their vanity, is the circumſtance of devouring all, without leaving a morſel uneaten, at a grand repaſt given them at their return by the perſon who commanded the hunting-party. The firſt diſh ſerved up is the largeſt bear that has been killed, and that too whole, and with all his entrails. He is not even ſo much as flead, they being ſatisfied with having ſinged off the hair as is done to a hog. This feaſt is ſacred to I know not what genius, whoſe indignation they apprehend, ſhould they leave a morſel uneaten. They muſt not ſo much as leave any of the broth in which the meat has been boiled, which is nothing but a quantity of oil, or of liquid fat. Nothing can be more execrable food, and there never happens a feaſt of this ſort, but ſome one eats himſelf to death, and ſeveral ſuffer ſeverely.

The bear is never dangerous in this country, but when he is hungry, or after being wounded. They, however, uſe abundance of precautions in approaching him. They ſeldom attack the men, on the con-

contrary, they take to flight at the firſt ſight of one, and a dog will drive them a great way before him; if therefore they are every where ſuch as they are in Canada, one might eaſily anſwer the queſtion of M. Deſpreaux, that the bear dreads the traveller, and not the traveller the bear. The bear is in rut in the month of July; he then grows ſo lean, and his fleſh of ſo ſickly and diſagreeable a reliſh, that even the Indians, who have not the moſt delicate ſtomachs, and who often eat ſuch things as would make an European ſhudder, will hardly touch it. Who could imagine that an animal of this nature, and of ſo unlovely an appearance, ſhould grow leaner in one month by the *belle paſſion*, than after an abſtinence of ſix! It is not ſo ſurpriſing he ſhould be at this ſeaſon ſo fierce, and in ſo ill an humour, that it ſhould be dangerous to meet him. This is the effect of jealouſy.

This ſeaſon once over, he recovers his former *embompoint*, and to which nothing more contributes, than the fruits he finds every where in the woods, and of which he is extreme greedy. He is particularly fond of grapes, and as all the foreſts are full of vines which riſe to the tops of the higheſt trees, he makes no difficulty of climbing up in queſt of them. But ſhould an hunter diſcover him, his toothſomneſs would coſt him dear. After having thus fed a good while on fruits, his fleſh becomes exceedingly delicious, and continues ſo till the ſpring. It is, however, conſtantly attended with one very great fault, that of being too oily, ſo that except great moderation is uſed in eating it, it certainly occaſions a dyſentery. It is, moreover, very nouriſhing, and a bear's cub is at leaſt nothing inferior to lamb.

I for-

I forgot to inform your Grace, that the Indians always carry a great number of dogs with them in their huntings; theſe are the only domeſtick animals they breed, and that too only for hunting: they appear to be all of one ſpecies, with upright ears, and a long ſnout like that of a wolf; they are remarkable for their fidelity to their maſters, who feed them however but very ill, and never make much of them. They are very early bred to that kind of hunting for which they are intended, and excellent hunters they make. I have no more time to write you, being this moment called on to go on board.

*I am*, &c.

LETTER

# LETTER VII.

*Deſcription of the Country and Iſlands of* Richelieu *and of* St. Francis. *Of the* Abenaquis *village. Of the ancient fort of* Richelieu, *and of ſuch as were formerly in each pariſh. Shining actions of two* Canadian *Ladies. Of the other huntings of the* Indians.

*St. Francis*, March 11, 1721.

*Madam*,

I Set out on the 9th from the Three Rivers. I did no more than croſs lake St. Peter, inclining towards the ſouth. I performed this journey in a ſledge, or as it is called here a cariole, the ice being ſtill ſtrong enough for all ſorts of carriages, and I arrived towards noon at St. Francis. I employed the afternoon, and yeſterday the whole day, in viſiting this canton, and am now going to give you an account of what I ſaw.

At the extremity of Lake St. Peter is a prodigious number of iſlands of all ſizes, called *les Iſles de Richelieu*, or Richelieu Iſlands, and turning towards the left coming from Quebec, you find ſix more, which lie towards the ſhore of a creek of a toler-

tolerable depth, into which a pretty large river diſcharges itſelf, which takes its riſe in the neighbourhood of New-York. The iſlands, river, and whole country bear the name of St. Francis. Each of the iſlands is above a quarter of a league long; their breadth is unequal; moſt of thoſe of Richelieu are ſmaller. All were formerly full of deer, does, roebucks, and elks; game ſwarmed in a ſurpriſing manner, as it is ſtill far from ſcarce; but the large beaſts have diſappeared. There are alſo caught excellent fiſh in the river St. Francis, and at its mouth. In winter they make holes in the ice, through which they let down nets five or ſix fathoms long, which are never drawn up empty. The fiſhes moſt commonly taken here are bars, achigans, and eſpecially maſquinongez, a ſort of pikes, which have the head larger than ours, and the mouth placed under a ſort of crooked ſnout, which gives them a ſingular figure. The lands of St. Francis, to judge of them by the trees they produce, and by the little which has yet been cultivated of them are very good. The planters are, however, poor enough, and ſeveral of them would be reduced to a ſtate of indigence, did not the trade they carry on with the Indians, their neighbours, help to ſupport them. But may not this trade, likewiſe, be a means of hindering them from growing rich, by rendering them lazy?

The Indians I am now ſpeaking of, are, Abenaquies, amongſt whom are ſome Algonquins, Sokokies, and Mahingans, better known by the name of Wolfs. This nation was formerly ſettled on the banks of the river Mantat, in New-York, of which country they ſeem to be natives. The Abenaquies came to St. Francis, from the ſouthern ſhores of New France, in the neighbourhood of New-

New-England. Their firſt ſettlement, after leaving their own country to live amongſt us, was on a little river which diſcharges itſelf into the St. Lawrence, almoſt oppoſite to Sillery, that is to ſay, about a league and a half above Quebec, on the ſouth ſhore. They ſettled here near a fall of water, called *le Sault de la Claudiere*, or the fall of the kettle. They now live on the banks of the St. Francis, two leagues from its diſcharge into lake St. Peter. This ſpot is very delightful, which is pity, theſe people having no reliſh for the beauties of a fine ſituation, and the huts of Indians contributing but little to the embelliſhment of a proſpect. This village is extremely populous, all the inhabitants of which are Chriſtians. The nation is docile, and always much attached to the French. But the miſſionary has the ſame inquietudes on their account with him at Beckancourt, and for the ſame reaſons.

I was regaled here with the juice of the maple; this is the ſeaſon of its flowing. It is extremely delicious, has a moſt pleaſing coolneſs, and is exceeding wholſome; the manner of extracting it is very ſimple. When the ſap begins to aſcend, they pierce the trunk of the tree, and by means of a bit of wood, which is inſerted in it, and along which it flows, as through a pipe, the liquor is conveyed into a veſſel placed under it. In order to produce an abundant flow, there muſt be much ſnow on the ground, with froſty nights, a ſerene ſky, and the wind not too cool. Our maples might poſſibly have the ſame virtue, had we as much ſnow in France as there is in Canada, and were they to laſt as long. In proportion as the ſap thickens the flow abates, and in a little time after, wholly ceaſes. It is eaſy to gueſs, that after ſuch a diſcharge of what

may

may be called its blood, the tree ſhould be far from being bettered: we are told, however, they will endure it for ſeveral years running. They would, perhaps, do better to let them reſt for two or three years, to give them time to recover their ſtrength. But at length, after it has been entirely drained, it is ſentenced to be cut down, and is extremely proper for many uſes, as well the wood as the roots and boughs. This tree muſt needs be very common, as great numbers of them are burnt.

The liquor of the maple is tolerably clear, tho' ſomewhat whitiſh. It is exceeding cooling and refreſhing, and leaves on the palate a certain flavour of ſugar, which is very agreeable. It is a great friend to the breaſt, and let the quantity drank be ever ſo great, or the party ever ſo much heated, it is perfectly harmleſs. The reaſon is, that it is entirely free from that crudity which occaſions pleuriſies, but has on the contrary a balſamick quality which ſweetens the blood, and a certain ſalt which preſerves its warmth. They add, that it never chryſtallizes, but that if it is kept for a certain ſpace of time, it becomes an excellent vinegar. I do not pretend to vouch this for fact, and I know a traveller ought not ſlightly to adopt every thing that is told him.

It is very probable the Indians, who are perfectly well-acquainted with all the virtues of their plants, have at all times, as well as at this day, made conſtant uſe of this liquor. But it is certain, they were ignorant of the art of making a ſugar from it, which we have ſince learnt them. They were ſatisfied with giving it two or three boilings, in order to thicken it a little, and to make a kind of ſyrup from it, which is pleaſant enough. They further

ther method they uſe to make ſugar of is to let it boil, till it takes a ſufficient conſiſtence, when it purifies of its own accord, without the mixture of any foreign ingredient. Only they muſt be very careful that the ſugar be not over-boiled, and to ſkim it well. The greateſt fault in this proceſs is to let the ſyrup harden too much, which renders it too fat, ſo that it never loſes a reliſh of honey, which renders it not ſo agreeable to the taſte, at leaſt till ſuch time as it is clarified.

This ſugar when made with care, which it certainly requires, is a natural pectoral, and does not burn the ſtomach. Beſides the manufacturing, it is done at a trifling expence. It has been commonly believed, that it is impoſſible to refine it in the ſame manner with the ſugar extracted from canes. I own, I ſee no reaſon to think ſo, and it is very certain that when it comes out of the hands of the Indians, it is purer and much better than that of the iſlands, which has had no more done to it. In fine, I gave ſome of it to a refiner of Orleans, who found no other fault to it, than that I have mentioned, and who attributed this defect wholly to its not having been left to drip long enough. He even judged it of a quality preferable to the other ſort, and of this it was, he made thoſe tablets, with which I had the honour to preſent your Grace, and which you were pleaſed to eſteem ſo much. It may be objected, that were this of of a good quality, it would have been made a branch of trade; but there is not a ſufficient quantity made for this, and perhaps, they are therefore in the wrong: but there are many things beſides this which are neglected in this country.

The plane-tree, the cherry-tree, the aſh, and walnut-trees of ſeveral kinds, alſo yield a liquor from which ſugar is made; but there is a leſs quantity of it, and the ſugar made from it, is not ſo good. Some, however, prefer that made from the aſh, but there is very little of it made. Would your Grace have thought that there ſhould be found in Canada what Virgil mentions, whilſt he is predicting the golden age, *Et dura quercus ſudabunt roſcida Mella*, That honey ſhould diſtil from the oak?

This whole country has long been the ſcene of many a bloody battle, as, during the war with the Iroquóis, it was moſt expoſed to the incurſions of thoſe barbarians. They uſually came down by way of a river, which falls into the St. Lawrence, a little above lake St. Peter, and on the ſame ſide with St. Francis, and which for this reaſon bore their name; it has ſince gone by the name of *la Riviere de Sorel.* The iſlands of Richelieu which they firſt met with, ſerved both for a retreat and place of ambuſh; but after this paſs was ſhut up to them by a fort, built at the mouth of the river, they came down by land both above and below, and eſpecially made their inroads on the ſide of St. Francis, where they found the ſame conveniencies for pillaging, and where they committed cruelties horrible to relate.

Thence they ſpread themſelves over all the colony, ſo that in order to defend the inhabitants from their fury, there was a neceſſity of building in every pariſh a kind of fort, where the planters and other perſons might take ſanctuary on the firſt alarm. In theſe there were two centinels kept night and day, and in every one of them ſome field-pieces, or at

leaſt patereroes, as well to keep the enemy at a diſtance, as to advertiſe the inhabitants to be on their guard, or to give the ſignal for ſuccour. Theſe forts were no more than ſo many large encloſures fenced with paliſadoes with ſome redoubts. The church and manor-houſe of the lord were alſo within theſe places, in which there was alſo a ſpace for women, children, and cattle, in caſe of neceſſity. Theſe were ſufficient to protect the people from any inſult, none of them having ever, as I know, been taken by the Iroquois.

They have even ſeldom taken the trouble to block them up, and ſtill more rarely to attack them with open force. The one is too dangerous an enterprize for Indians, who have no defenſive arms, and who are not fond of victories bought with bloodſhed. The other is altogether remote from their way of making war. There are, however, two attacks of the fort de Vercheres, which are famous in the Canadian annals, and it ſeems the Iroquois ſet their hearts here upon reducing them contrary to their cuſtom, only to ſhew the valour and intrepidity of two Amazons.

In 1690, theſe barbarians having learnt that Madam de Vercheres was almoſt left alone in the fort, approached it without being diſcovered, and put themſelves in a poſture for ſcaling the paliſado. Some muſket-ſhot which were fired at them very ſeaſonably, drove them to a diſtance; but they inſtantly returned: they were again repulſed, and what occaſioned their utter aſtoniſhment, they could only diſcover a woman, whom they met wherever they went. This was Madam de Vercheres, who appeared as undiſmayed as if ſhe had had a numerous garriſon. The hopes of the beſiegers in the

beginning of reducing with eaſe a place unprovided with men to defend it, made them return ſeveral times to the charge; but the lady always repulſed them. She continued to defend herſelf for two days, with a valour and preſence of mind which would have done honour to an old warriour; and ſhe at laſt compelled the enemy to retire, for fear of having their retreat cut off, full of ſhame of having been repulſed by a woman.

Two years afterwards, another party of the ſame nation, but much more numerous than the firſt, appeared in ſight of the fort, whilſt all the inhabitants were abroad, and generally at work in the field. The Iroquois finding them ſcattered in this manner and void of all diſtruſt, ſeized them all one after another, and then marched towards the fort. The daughter of the lord of the land, fourteen years old, was at the diſtance of two hundred paces from it. At the firſt cry ſhe heard, ſhe run to get into it; the Indians purſued her, and one of them came up with her juſt as ſhe had her foot upon the threſhold; but having laid hold of her by the handkerchief ſhe wore about her neck, ſhe looſed it, and ſhut the gate on herſelf.

There was not a ſoul in the fort, beſides a young ſoldier and a number of women, who, at the ſight of their huſbands, who were faſt bound, and led priſoners, raiſed moſt lamentable cries; the young lady loſt neither her courage nor preſence of mind. She begun with taking of her head-dreſs, bound up her hair, put on a hat and coat, locked up all the women, whoſe groans and weeping could not fail of giving new courage to the enemy. Afterwards ſhe fixed a piece of cannon, and ſeveral muſket-ſhot, and ſhewing herſelf with her ſoldier, ſometime in one

one redoubt, ſometimes in another, and changing her dreſs from time to time, and always firing very ſeaſonably, on ſeeing the Iraquoiſe approach the breaſt-work, theſe Indians thought there were many men in the garriſon, and when the chevalier de Criſaſy, informed by the firing of the cannon, appeared to ſuccour the place, the men were already decamped.

Let us now return to our hunting; that of the elk would be no leſs advantagious to us at this day than that of the beaver, had our predeceſſors in the colony paid due attention to the profits which might have been made by it, and had they not almoſt entirely deſtroyed the whole ſpecies, at leaſt in ſuch places as are within our reach.

What they call here the orignal, is the ſame with the animal, which in Germany, Poland, and Ruſſia, is called the elk, or the great beaſt. This animal in this country is of the ſize of a horſe, or mule of the country of Auvergne; this has a broad crupper, the tail but a finger's length, the hough extremely high, with the feet and legs of a ſtag; the neck, withers, and upper part of the hough are covered with long hair; the head is above two feet long, which he ſtretches forward, and which gives the animal a very aukward appearance; his muzzle is thick, and bending on the upper-part, like that of a camel; and his noſtrils are ſo wide, that one may with eaſe thruſt half his arm into them; laſtly, his antlers are full as long as thoſe of a ſtag, and are much more ſpreading; they are branching and flat like thoſe of a doe, and are renewed every year; but I do not know whether they receive an increaſe which denotes the age of the animal.

It has been pretended that the orignal, or elk, is ſubject to the epilepſy, and when he is ſeized with any fit, he cures himſelf by rubbing his ear with his left hind foot till the blood comes; a circumſtance which has made his hoof be taken for a ſpecific againſt the falling ſickneſs. This is applied over the heart of the patient, which is alſo done for a palpitation of the heart; they place in the left hand, and rub the ear with it. But why do not they make the blood come as the elk does? This horny ſubſtance is alſo believed to be good in the pleuriſy, in cholic pains, in fluxes, vertigoes, and purples, when pulveriſed and taken in water. I have heard ſay, that the Algonquins, who formerly fed on the fleſh of this animal, were very ſubject to the epilepſy, and yet made no uſe of this remedy. They were, perhaps, acquainted with a better.

The colour of the elk's hair is a mixture of light grey, and of a dark red. It grows hollow as the beaſt grows older, never lies flat, nor quits its elaſtic force; thus it is in vain to beat it, it conſtantly riſes again. They make matraſſes and hair bottoms of it. Its fleſh is of an agreeable reliſh, light and nouriſhing, and it would be great pity if it gave the falling-ſickneſs; but our hunters, who have lived on it for ſeveral winters running, never perceived the leaſt ill qualitity in it. The ſkin is ſtrong, ſoft, and oily, is made into Chamois leather, and makes excellent buff-coats, which are alſo very light.

The Indians look upon the elk as an animal of good omen, and believe that thoſe who dream of them often, may expect a long life; it is quite the contrary with the bear, except on the approach of the ſeaſon for hunting thoſe creatures. There is alſo

alſo a very diverting tradition among the Indians of a great elk, of ſuch a monſtrous ſize, that the reſt are like piſmires in compariſon of him; his legs, ſay they, are ſo long, that eight feet of ſnow are not the leaſt incumbrance to him; his hide is proof againſt all manner of weapons, and he has a ſort of arm proceeding from his ſhoulders, which he uſes as we do ours. He is always attended by a vaſt number of elks which form his court, and which render him all the ſervices he requires. Thus the antients had their Phenix and Pegaſus, and the Chineſe and Japoneſe their Kirim, their Foké, their Water-dragon, and their bird of Paradiſe. *Tutto 'l mondo é Paeſe.*

The elk is a lover of cold countries; he feeds on graſs in ſummer, and in winter gnaws the bark of trees. When the ſnow is very deep, theſe animals aſſemble in ſome pine-wood, to ſhelter themſelves from the ſeverity of the weather, where they remain whilſt there is any thing to live upon. This is the beſt ſeaſon for hunting them, except when the ſun has ſtrength enough to melt the ſnow. For the froſt forming a kind of cruſt on the ſurface in the night, the elk, who is a heavy animal, breaks it with his forked hoof, and with great difficulty extricates himſelf except at this time, and above all, when the ſnow is not deep, it is very difficult to get near him, at leaſt, without danger, for when he is wounded he is furious, and will return boldly on the huntſman and tread him under his feet. The way to ſhun him is to throw him your coat, on which he will diſcharge all his vengeance, whilſt the huntſman concealed behind ſome tree, is at liberty to take proper meaſures for diſpatching him. The elk goes always at a hard trot, but ſuch as equals the ſwifteſt ſpeed of the buffalo, and will hold out

a great while. But the Indians are ſtill better courſers than he. It is affirmed that he falls down upon his knees to drink, eat and ſleep, and that he has a bone in his heart, which being reduced to powder, and taken in broth, facilitates delivery, and ſoftens the pains of child bearing.

The moſt northern nations of Canada have a way of hunting this animal, very ſimple and free from danger. The hunters divide into two bands, one embarks on board canoes, which canoes keep at a ſmall diſtance from each other, forming a pretty large ſemicircle, the two ends of which reach the ſhore. The other body, which remains aſhore, perform pretty much the ſame thing, and at firſt ſurround a large track of ground. Then the huntſmen let looſe their dogs, and raiſe all the elks within the bounds of this ſemicircle, and drive them into the river or lake, which they no ſooner enter than they are fired upon from all the canoes, and not a ſhot miſſes, ſo that rarely any one eſcapes.

Champlain mentions another way of hunting, not only the elk, but alſo the deer and caribou, which has ſome reſemblance to this. They ſurround a ſpace of ground with poſts, interwoven with branches of trees, leaving a pretty narrow opening, where they place nets made of thongs of raw hides. This ſpace is of a triangular form, and from the angle in which the entry is, they form another, but much larger triangle. Thus the two encloſures communicate with each other at the two angles. The two ſides of the ſecond triangle are alſo incloſed with poſts, interwoven in the ſame manner, and the hunters drawn up in one line form the baſis of it. They then advance, keeping the line entire, raiſing prodigious cries, and ſtriking againſt

againſt ſomething which reſounds greatly. The game thus rouſed, and being able to eſcape by none of the ſides, can only fly into the other encloſure, where ſeveral are taken at their firſt entering by the neck or horns. They make great efforts to diſentangle themſelves, and ſometimes carry away or break the thongs. They alſo ſometimes ſtrangle themſelves, or at leaſt give the huntſmen time to diſpatch them at leiſure. Even thoſe that eſcape are not a whit advanced, but find themſelves encloſed in a ſpace too narrow to be able to ſhun the arrows which are ſhot at them from all hands.

The elk has other enemies beſides the Indians, and who carry on full as cruel a war againſt him. The moſt terrible of all theſe is the *Carcajou* or *Quincajou*, a kind of cat, with a tail ſo long that he twiſts it ſeveral times round his body, and with a ſkin of a browniſh red. As ſoon as this hunter comes up with the elk, he leaps upon him, and faſtens upon his neck, about which he twiſts his long tail, and then cuts his jugular. The elk has no means of ſhunning this diſaſter, but by flying to the water the moment he is ſeized by this dangerous enemy. The carcajou, who cannot endure the water, quits his hold immediately; but, if the water happen to be at too great a diſtance, he will deſtroy the elk before he reaches it. This hunter too as he does not poſſeſs the faculty of ſmelling with the greateſt acuteneſs, carries three foxes a hunting with him, which he ſends on the diſcovery. The moment they have got ſcent of an elk, two of them place themſelves by his ſide, and the third takes poſt behind him; and all three manage matters ſo well, by haraſſing the prey, that they compel him to go to the place where they have left the carcajou, with whom they afterwards ſettle about the

the dividing the prey. Another wile of the carcajou, in order to ſeize his prey is to climb upon a tree, where couched along ſome projecting branch, he waits till an elk paſſes, and leaps upon him, the moment he ſees him within his reach. There are, many perſons, Madam, who have taken it into their heads to imagine, that the accounts of Canada, make the Indians more terrible people than they really are. They are, however, men. But under what climate can we find brute animals, indued with ſo ſtrong an inſtinct, and ſo forcibly inclined to induſtry, as the fox, the beaver, and the carcajou.

The ſtag in Canada is abſolutely the ſame with ours in France, though, perhaps, generally ſomewhat bigger. It does not appear that the Indians give them much diſturbance; at leaſt, I do not find they make war upon him in form and with much preparation. It is quite different with reſpect to the caribou, an animal differing in nothing from the raindeer, except in the colour of its hair, which is brown a little inclining to red. This creature is not quite ſo tall as the elk, and has more of the aſs or mule in its ſhape, and is at leaſt equal in ſpeed with the deer. Some years ſince, one of them was ſeen on Cape Diamond, above Quebec; he probably was flying before ſome hunters, but immediately perceived he was in no place of ſafety, and made ſcarce any more than one leap from thence into the river. A wild goat on the alps could hardly have done more. He afterwards ſwam croſs the river with the ſame celerity, but was very little the better for having ſo done. Some Canadians who were going out againſt an enemy, and lay encamped at point Levi, having perceived him, watched his landing, and ſhot him. The

tongue

tongue of this animal is highly eſteemed, and his true country ſeems to be near Hudſon's-Bay. The Sieur Jeremie, who paſſed ſeveral years in theſe northern parts, tells us, that between Daniſh river and Port Nelſon, prodigious numbers of them were to be ſeen, which being driven by the gnats, and a ſort of vermine called *Tons*, come to cool and refreſh themſelves by the ſea-ſhore, and that for the ſpace of forty or fifty leagues you are continually meeting herds of ten thouſand in number at the leaſt.

It appears that the *Caribou* has not multiplied greatly in the moſt frequented parts of Canada; but the elk was every where found in great numbers, on our firſt diſcovery of this country. And theſe animals were not only capable of becoming a conſiderable article in commerce, but alſo a great conveniency of life, had there been more care taken to preſerve them. This is what has not been done, and whether it is that the numbers of them have been thinned, and the ſpecies in ſome ſort diminiſhed, or that by frighting them, they have grown wilder, and ſo have been obliged to retire to other parts, nothing can be more rare than to meet with any of them at preſent.

In the ſouthern and weſtern parts of New France, on both ſides of the Miſſiſſippi, the kind of hunting moſt in vogue, is, that of the buffalo, which is performed in this manner. The huntſmen draw up in four lines, forming a very large ſquare, and begin with ſetting the graſs on fire, that being dry and very rank at this ſeaſon; they afterwards advance in proportion as the fire gets ground, cloſing their ranks as they go. The buffaloes, which are extremely timorous of fire, always fly, till at laſt they

they find themſelves ſo hemmed in, and ſo cloſe to one another, that generally not a ſingle beaſt eſcapes. It is affirmed, that no party ever returns from hunting without having killed fifteen hundred or two thouſand beaſts. But leſt two different companies ſhould hurt one another, they take care before they ſet out, to ſettle the time and place they intend to hunt. There are even penalties for ſuch as tranſgreſs this regulation, as well as for thoſe who quit their poſts, and ſo give the buffaloes an opportunity of eſcaping. Theſe pains and penalties are, that the perſons tranſgreſſing may be ſtripped by any private perſon at will of every thing, and which is the greateſt poſſible affront to an Indian, their arms not excepted, they may alſo throw down their cabbins. The chief is ſubject to this law as well as the reſt, and any one who ſhould go to rebel againſt it, would endanger the kindling a war, which ſay they would not be ſo eaſily extinguiſhed.

The buffalo of Canada is larger than ours; his horns are ſhort, black, and low; there is a great rough beard under the muzzle, and another tuft on the crown of the head, which falling over the eyes, give him a hideous aſpect. He has on the back, a hunch or ſwelling, which begins over his haunches, encreaſing always as it approaches his ſhoulders. The firſt rib forwards is a whole cubit higher than thoſe towards the back, and is three fingers broad, and the whole riſing is covered with a long reddiſh hair. The reſt of the body is covered with a black wool, in great eſteem. It is affirmed, that the fleece of a buffalo weighs eight pounds. This animal has a very broad cheſt, the crupper pretty thin, the tail extremely ſhort, and ſcarce any neck at all; but the head is larger than that of ours. He commonly flies as ſoon as he perceives any one, and

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one dog will make a whole herd of them take to the gallop. He has a very delicate and quick ſcent, and in order to approach him without being perceived, near enough to ſhoot him, you muſt take care not to have the wind of him. But when he is wounded he grows furious and will turn upon the hunters. He is equally dangerous when the cow buffalo has young newly brought forth. His fleſh is good, but that of the female only is eaten, that of the male being too hard and tough. As to the hide, there is none better in the known world; it is eaſily dreſſed, and though exceeding ſtrong, becomes as ſupple and ſoft as the beſt ſhamois leather. The Indians make bucklers of it, which are very light, and which a muſket-ball will hardly pierce.

There is another ſort of buffalo found in the neighbourhood of Hudſon's-Bay, the hide and wool of which are equally valuable with thoſe of the ſort now mentioned. The following is what the *Sieur Jeremie* ſays of it. "Fifteen leagues from Danes-River, you find the Sea-wolf-River, there being in fact great numbers of thoſe animals in it. Between thoſe two rivers, are a kind of buffaloes, called by us *Boeufs muſqués*, or muſk-buffaloes, from their having ſo ſtrong a ſcent of muſk, that, at a certain ſeaſon, it is impoſſible to eat them. Theſe animals have a very fine wool, it is longer than that of the Barbary ſheep. I had ſome of it brought over to France in 1708, of which I cauſed ſtockings to be made for me, which were finer than ſilk ſtockings." Theſe buffaloes, though ſmaller than ours, have, however, much longer and thicker horns; their roots join on the crown of their heads, and reach down by their eyes almoſt as low as the throat; the end afterwards bends upwards, forming a ſort of creſcent. Some of theſe are ſo thick,

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that I have ſeen ſome, which after being ſeparated from the ſkull weighed ſixty pounds a pair. Their legs are very ſhort, ſo that this wool continually trails along the ground as they walk; which renders them ſo deformed, that at a ſmall diſtance you can hardly diſtinguiſh on which ſide the head ſtands. There is no great number of theſe animals, ſo that had the Indians been ſent out to hunt them, the ſpecies had before now been entirely deſtroyed. Add to this, that as their legs are very ſhort, they are killed when the ſnow lies deep, with lances, and are utterly incapable of eſcaping.

The moſt common animal in Canada at this day is the roe-buck, which differs in nothing from ours. He is ſaid to ſhed tears when he finds himſelf hard preſſed by the huntſmen. When young his ſkin is ſtriped with different colours; afterwards this hair falls off, and other hair of the ſame colour with that of the reſt of theſe animals grows up in its ſtead. This creature is far from being fierce, and is eaſily tamed; he appears to be naturally a lover of mankind. The tame female retires to the woods when ſhe is in rut, and after ſhe has had the male, returns to her maſter's houſe. When the time of bringing forth is come, ſhe retires once more to the woods, where ſhe remains ſome days with her young, and after that ſhe returns to ſhew herſelf to her maſter; ſhe conſtantly viſits her young; they follow her when they think it is time, and take the fawns, which ſhe continues to nouriſh in the houſe. It is ſurpriſing enough any of our habitations ſhould be without whole herds of them; the Indians hunt them only occaſionally.

There are alſo many wolves in Canada, or rather a kind of cats, for they have nothing of the wolf but

but a kind of howling; in every other circumſtance they are, ſays M. Sarraſin, *ex genere felino*, of the cat kind. Theſe are natural hunters, living only on the animals they catch, and which they purſue to the top of the talleſt trees. Their fleſh is white and very good eating; their fur and ſkin are both well known in France; this is one of the fineſt furs in the whole country, and one of the moſt conſiderable articles in its commerce. That of a certain ſpecies of black foxes, which live in the northern mountains, is ſtill more eſteemed. I have, however heard, that the black fox of Muſcovy, and of the northern parts of Europe is ſtill more highly valued. They are, moreover, exceeding rare here, probably on account of the difficulty of catching them.

There is a more common ſort, the hair of which is black or grey, mixed with white; others of them are quite grey, and others again of a tawny red. They are found in the Upper Miſſiſſippi, of infinite beauty, and with a fur of an argentine or ſilver grey. We find here likewiſe tygers and wolves of a ſmaller ſort than ours. The foxes hunt the water-fowl after a very ingenious manner: they advance a little into the water, and afterwards retire, playing a thouſand antick tricks on the banks. The ducks, buſtards, and other ſuch birds, tickled with the ſport, approach the fox; when he ſees them within reach, he keeps very quiet for a while at firſt, that he may not frighten them, moving only his tail, as if on purpoſe to draw them ſtill nearer, and the fooliſh creatures are ſuch dupes to his craftineſs, as to come and peck at his tail; the fox immediately ſprings upon them, and ſeldom miſſes his aim. Dogs have been bred to the

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ſame ſport with tolerable ſucceſs, and the ſame dogs carry on a fierce war againſt the foxes.

There is a kind of polecat, which goes by the name of *Enfant du Diable*, or the Child of the Devil; or *Bête puante*; a title derived from his ill ſcent, becauſe his urine, which he lets go, when he finds himſelf purſued, infects the air for half a quarter of a league round; this is in other reſpects a very beautiful creature. He is of the ſize of a ſmall cat, but thicker, the ſkin or fur ſhining, and of a greyiſh colour, with white lines, forming a ſort of oval on the back from the neck quite to the tail. This tail is buſhy like that of a fox, and turned up like a ſquirrel. Its fur, like that of the animal called *Pekan*, another ſort of wild-cat, much of the ſame ſize with ours, and of the otter, the ordinary polecat, the *pitois*, wood-rat, ermine, and martin, are what is called *la menue pelleterie*, or leſſer peltry. The ermine is of the ſize of our ſquirrel, but not quite ſo long; his fur is of a moſt beautiful white, and his tail is long, and the tip of it black as jet; our martins are not ſo red as thoſe of France, and have a much finer fur. They commonly keep in the middle of woods, whence they never ſtir but once in two or three years, but always in large flocks. The Indians have a notion, that the year in which they leave the woods, will be good for hunting, that is, that there will be a great fall of ſnow. Martins ſkins ſell actually here at a crown a piece, I mean the ordinary ſort, for ſuch as are brown go as high as four livres and upwards.

The *pitoi* differs from the polecat only in that its fur is longer, blacker, and thicker. Theſe two animals make war on the birds, even of the largeſt ſorts,

ſorts, and make great ravages amongſt dove-coats and henrooſts. The wood-rat is twice the ſize of ours; he has a buſhy tail, and is of a beautiful ſilver grey: there are even ſome entirely of a moſt beautiful white; the female has a bag under her belly, which ſhe opens and ſhuts at pleaſure; in this ſhe places her young when ſhe is purſued, and ſo ſaves them with herſelf from their common enemy.

With regard to the ſquirrel, this animal enjoys a tolerable degree of tranquillity, ſo that there are a prodigious number of them in this country. They are diſtinguiſhed into three different ſorts; the red, which are exactly the ſame with ours; thoſe called *Swiſſes* of a ſmaller ſize, and ſo called, becauſe they have long ſtripes of red, white and black, much like the liveries of the pope's Swiſs guards; and the flying ſquirrel, of much the ſame ſize with the Swiſſes, and with a dark grey fur; they are called flying ſquirrels, not that they really can fly, but from their leaping from tree to tree, to the diſtance of forty paces and more. From a higher place, they will fly or leap double the diſtance. What gives them this facility of leaping, is two membranes, one on each ſide, reaching between their fore and hind legs, and which when ſtretched are two inches broad; they are very thin, and covered over with a ſort of cats hair or down. This little animal is eaſily tamed, and is very lively except when aſleep, which is often the caſe, and he puts up wherever he can find a place, in one's ſleeves, pockets, and muffs. He firſt pitches upon his maſter, whom he will diſtinguiſh amongſt twenty perſons.

The Canadian porcupine is of the ſize of a middling dog, but ſhorter and not ſo tall; his hair is about

four inches long, of the thickneſs of a ſmall ſtalk of corn, is white, hollow, and very ſtrong, eſpecially upon the back; theſe are his weapons, offenſive and defenſive. He darts them at once againſt any enemy who attempts his life, and if it pierce the fleſh ever ſo little, it muſt be inſtantly drawn out, otherwiſe it ſinks quite into it; for this reaſon people are very cautious of letting their dogs come near him. His fleſh is extreme good eating. A porcupine roaſted is full as good as a ſucking pig.

Hares and rabbits are like thoſe of Europe, except that their hind legs are longer. Their ſkins are in no great requeſt, as the hair is continually falling off; it is pity, for their hair is exceeding fine and might be uſed without detriment in the hat-manufacture. They grow grey in winter, and never ſtir from their warrens or holes, where they live on the tendereſt branches of the birch-trees. In ſummer they are of a carrotty red; the fox makes a continual and a moſt cruel war upon them ſummer and winter, and the Indians take them in winter on the ſnow, with gins, when they go out in ſearch of proviſions.

*I have the honour to be*, &c.

LETTER

# LETTER VIII.

*Deſcription of the country between lake* St. Peter *and* Montreal; *in what it differs from that near* Quebec. *Deſcription of the iſland and city of* Montreal, *and the country adjacent. Of the ſea-cow, ſea-wolf, porpoiſe, and whale-fiſhery.*

*Montreal, March* 20, 1721.

*Madam,*

I Set out on the 13th from St. Francis, and next day arrived in this city. In this paſſage, which is about twenty leagues, I had not the ſame pleaſure as formerly of performing the ſame journey by water in a canoe, in the fineſt weather imaginable, and in viewing, as I advanced, channels and pieces of water without end, formed by a multitude of iſlands, which ſeemed at a diſtance part of the Continent, and to ſtop the river in his courſe, thoſe delightful ſcenes which were perpetually varying like the ſcenes of a theatre, and which one would think had been contrived on purpoſe for the pleaſure of travellers; I had, however, ſome amends made me by the ſingular ſight of an Archipelago, become, in ſome ſort, a Continent, and by the conveniency of taking the air in my cariole, on channels lying

between two iſlands, which ſeemed to have been planted by the hand like ſo many orangeries.

With reſpect to the proſpect, it cannot be called beautiful at this ſeaſon. Nothing can be more diſmal than that univerſal whiteneſs, which takes place in the room of that vaſt variety of colours, the greateſt charm of the country, than the trees which preſent nothing to the view, but naked tops, and whoſe branches are covered with icicles. Further, Madam, the lake of St. Francis is in this country, what the Loire is in France. Towards Quebec the lands are good, though generally without any thing capable of affording pleaſure to the ſight; in other reſpects, this climate is very rude; as the further you go down the river, the nearer you approach to the north, and conſequently the colder it becomes. Quebec lies in 47 deg. 56 min. The Three Rivers in 46 deg. and a few minutes; and Montreal between 44 and 45; the river above lake St. Peter making and winding towards the ſouth. One would think therefore, after paſſing Richelieu iſlands, that one were tranſported into another climate. The air becomes ſofter and more temperate, the country more level, the river more pleaſant, and the banks infinitely more agreeable and delightful. You meet with iſlands from time to time, ſome of which are inhabited, and others in their natural ſtate, which afford the ſight the fineſt landſkips in the world; in a word, this is the *Touraine* and the *Limagne* of *Auvergne*, compared with the countries of *Maine* and *Normandy*.

The iſland of Montreal, which is, as it were the centre of this fine country, is ten leagues in length from eaſt to weſt, and near four leagues in its greateſt breadth; the mountain whence it derives it name, and

and which has two ſummits of unequal height, is ſituated almoſt in the middle between its two extremities, and only at the diſtance of near half a league from the ſouth-ſhore of it, on which Montreal is built. This city was firſt called *Ville Marie* by its founders, but this name has never obtained the ſanction of cuſtom in converſation, and holds place only in the public acts, and amongſt the lords proprietaries, who are exceeding jealous of it. Theſe lords, who are not only lords of the city, but alſo of the whole iſland, are the governors of the ſeminary of St. Sulpicius; and as almoſt all the lands on it are excellent, and well cultivated, and the city as populous as Quebec, we may venture to ſay, this lordſhip is well worth half a ſcore the beſt in all Canada. This is the fruit of the induſtry and wiſdom of the lords proprietors of this iſland, and it is certain, that had it been parcelled out amongſt a ſcore of proprietors, it would neither have been in the flouriſhing ſtate in which we now ſee it, nor would the inhabitants have been near ſo happy.

The city of Montreal has a very pleaſing aſpect, and is beſides conveniently ſituated, the ſtreets well laid out, and the houſes well built. The beauty of the country round it, and of its proſpects, inſpire a certain chearfulneſs of which every body is perfectly ſenſible. It is not fortified, only a ſimple paliſado with baſtions, and in a very indifferent condition, with a ſorry redoubt on a ſmall ſpot, which ſerves as a ſort of outwork, and terminates in a gentle declivity, at the end of which is a ſmall ſquare, which is all the defence it has. This is the place you firſt find on your entering the city on the ſide of Quebec. It is not yet quite forty years ſince it was entirely without any fortifications, and conſequently was every day expoſed to the incurſions of the Engliſh

and Indians, who could eaſily have burnt it. The Chevalier de Callieres, brother to him who was plenipotentiary at Ryſwick, was he who firſt incloſed it, whilſt he was governor of it. There has been ſome years ſince a project for walling it round *; but it will be no eaſy matter to bring the inhabitants to contribute to it. They are brave, but far from rich; they have been already found very hard to be perſwaded to the neceſſity of this expence, and are fully perſuaded that their own courage is more than ſufficient to defend their city againſt all invaders. Our Canadians in general have a good opinion of themſelves in this particular, and we muſt acknowlege, not without good grounds. But by a natural conſequence of this ſelf-ſufficiency it is much eaſier to ſurpriſe than to defeat them.

Montreal is of a quadrangular form, ſituated on the bank of the river, which riſing gently, divides the city lengthwiſe into the upper and lower towns, though you can ſcarce perceive the aſcent from the one to the other; the hoſpital, royal-magazines, and place of arms, are in the lower-town, which is alſo the quarter in which the merchants for the moſt part have their houſes. The ſeminary and pariſh-church, the convent of the Recollets, the jeſuits, the daughters of the congregation, the governor, and moſt of the officers dwell in the high-town. Beyond a ſmall ſtream coming from the north-weſt, and which terminates the city on this ſide, you come to a few houſes and the hoſpital general; and turning towards the right beyond the Recollets, whoſe convent is at the extremity of the city, on the ſame ſide, there is a kind of ſuburb beginning to be built, which will in time be a very fine quarter.

* This project has been ſince put in execution.

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The jeſuits have only a ſmall houſe here, but their church, the roof of which is juſt upon the point of being finiſhed is large and well built. The convent of the Recollets is more ſpacious, and their community more numerous. The ſeminary is in the centre of the town; they ſeem to have thought more of rendering it ſolid and commodious than magnificent; you may, however, ſtill diſcover it to be the manor-houſe; it communicates with the pariſh-church, which has much more the air of a cathedral than that of Quebec. Divine worſhip is celebrated here with a modeſty and dignity which inſpire the ſpectators with an awful notion of that God who is worſhipped in it.

The houſe of the daughters of the Congregation, though one of the largeſt in the city, is ſtill too ſmall to lodge ſo numerous a community. This is the head of an order and the noviciate of an inſtitute, which ought to be ſo much the dearer to New France, and to this city in particular, on account of its taking its riſe in it; and as the whole colony has felt the advantage of ſo noble an endowment. The Hotel-Dieu, or Hoſpital is ſerved by theſe nuns, the firſt of whom came from la Flêche in Anjou. They are poor, which, however, neither appears in their hall, or yards, which are ſpacious, well-furniſhed, and extremely well provided with beds; nor in their church, which is handſome, and exceeding richly ornamented; nor in their houſe, which is well built, neat and commodious; but they are at the ſame time ill-fed, though all of them are indefatigable either in the inſtruction of the youth or in taking care of the ſick.

The hoſpital-general owes its foundation to a private perſon called Charron, who aſſociated with ſe-

veral pious perſons, not only for this good work, but alſo to provide ſchool-maſters for the country-pariſhes, who ſhould perform the ſame functions with reſpect to the boys, which the ſiſters of the congregation did with regard to the fair ſex; but this ſociety ſoon diſſolved; ſome being called off by their private concerns, and others by their natural inconſtancy, ſo that the Sieur Charron was ſoon left alone. He was not however diſcouraged, he opened his purſe, and found the ſecret to cauſe ſeveral perſons in power open theirs; he built a houſe, aſſembled maſters and hoſpitallers, and men took a pleaſure in aiding and impowering one who ſpared neither his money nor his labour, and whom no difficulties were capable of deterring. Laſtly, before his death, which happened in the year 1719, he had the conſolation to ſee his project beyond all fear of miſcarrying, at leaſt with reſpect to the hoſpital-general. The houſe is a fine edifice and the church a very handſome one. The ſchool-maſters are ſtill on no ſolid foundations in the pariſhes, and the prohibition made them by the court of wearing an uniform dreſs, and of taking ſimple vows, may poſſibly occaſion this project to be diſcontinued.

Between the iſland of Montreal and the Continent on the north ſide, is another iſland of about eight leagues in length, and full two in breadth where broadeſt. This was at firſt called *l'Iſle de Montmaſny*, after a governor-general of Canada of this name; it was afterwards granted to the jeſuits, who gave it the name of *l'Iſle Jeſus*, which it ſtill retains, though it has paſſed from them to the ſuperiors of the ſeminary of Quebec, who have begun to plant it with inhabitants, and as the ſoil is

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excellent, there is ground to hope it will very ſoon be cleared.

The channel which ſeparates the two iſlands, bears the name of *the river of Meadows*, as it runs between very fine ones. Its courſe is interrupted in the middle by a rapid current, called the Fall of the Recollet, in memory of a monk of that order drowned in it. The religious of the ſeminary of Montreal had, for a great while, an Indian miſſion in this place, which they have lately tranſported ſomewhere elſe.

The third arm of the river is interſperſed with ſo prodigious a multitude of iſlands, that there is almoſt as much land as water. This channel bears the name of *Milles Iſles*, or *the Thouſand Iſlands*, or St. John's River. At the extremity of the *Iſle Jeſus*, is the ſmall iſland *l'Iſle Bizard*, from the name of a Swiſs officer, whoſe property it was, and who died a major of Montreal. A little higher towards the ſouth, you find the iſland *Perrot*, thus termed from M. Perrot, who was the firſt governor of Montreal, and the father of the counteſs de la Roche Allard, and of the lady of the preſident Lubert. This iſland is almoſt two leagues every way, and the ſoil is excellent; they are beginning to clear it. The iſland *Bizard* terminates the lake of the two mountains, as the iſland Perrot ſeparates it from that of *St. Louis*.

The lake of the two mountains is properly the opening of the great river, otherwiſe called *la Riviere des Outaowais*, into the St. Lawrence. It is two leagues long, and almoſt as many broad. That of St. Louis is ſomething larger, but is only a widening of the river St. Laurence. Hitherto the French

French colony reached no further to the weſtward; but they begin to make new plantations higher up the river, and the ſoil is every where excellent.

What has been the preſervation, or at leaſt the ſafety of Montreal, and all the country round it during the laſt wars, is two villages of Iroquois Chriſtians, and the fort of *Chambly*. The firſt of theſe villages is that of *Sault St. Lewis*, ſituated on the Continent, on the ſouth-ſide of the river, and three leagues above Montreal. It is very populous, and has ever been looked upon as one of our ſtrongeſt barriers againſt the idolatrous Iroquois, and the Engliſh of New-York. It has already changed its ſituation twice within the ſpace of two leagues. Its ſecond ſtation, when I ſaw it in 1708, was near a rapid ſtream, called *Sault St. Lewis*, which name it ſtill retains though at a conſiderable diſtance from it. It appears to have entirely fixed at laſt; for the church which they are juſt about to finiſh, and the miſſionaries houſe are each in their own kind two of the fineſt edifices in all Canada; the ſituation of them is charming. The river which is very broad in this place is embelliſhed with ſeveral iſlands, which have a very pleaſant aſpect. The iſland of Montreal is well ſtocked with inhabitants, forms the view on one hand, and the ſight has no bounds on the other ſide, except lake St. Louis, which begins a little above this.

The ſecond village bears the name of *la Montaigne*, having been for a long time ſituated on the double-headed mountain, which has given its name to the iſland. It has ſince been tranſlated to the fall of the Recollet, as I have already told you; it now ſtands on the Terra Firma oppoſite to the weſtern extremity of the iſland. The eccleſiaſticks of the ſemi-

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nary of Montreal govern in it. There have many brave warriors come from theſe two towns, and the terror which prevailed here was admirable till the avarice of our dealers introduced drunkenneſs amongſt them, which has made ſtill greater ſavages here than in the miſſions of St. Francis and Becancourt.

The miſſionaries have in vain employed all their induſtry and vigilance to put a ſtop to the torrent of this diſorder; in vain have they made uſe of the aid of the ſecular arm, threatned them with the wrath of heaven, made uſe of the moſt perſuaſive arguments, all has been to no purpoſe, and even where it was impoſſible not to diſcover the hand of God ſtretched out againſt the authors of this evil, all have been found inſufficient to bring thoſe Chriſtians back to a ſenſe of their duty, who had been once blindfolded by the ſordid and moſt contemptible paſſion of lucre. Even in the very ſtreets of Montreal, are ſeen the moſt ſhocking ſpectacles, the never-failing effects of the drunkenneſs of theſe barbarians; huſbands, wives, fathers, mothers, children, brothers and ſiſters, ſeizing one another by the throats, tearing of one another by the ears, and worrying one another with their teeth like ſo many inraged wolves. The air reſounded during the night with their cries and howlings much more horrible than thoſe with which wild beaſts affright the woods.

Thoſe, who perhaps have greateſt reaſon to reproach themſelves with theſe horrors, are the firſt to aſk whether they are Chriſtians. One might anſwer them, yes, they are Chriſtians, and New Converts who know not what they do; but thoſe who in cold blood, and with a perfect knowledge of what

what they are about, reduce, from ſordid motives of avarice, thoſe ſimple people to this condition, can they be imagined to have any religion at all? We certainly know that an Indian will give all he is worth for one glaſs of brandy, this is ſtrong temptation to our dealers, againſt which, neither the exclamations of their paſtors, nor the zeal and authority of the magiſtrate, nor reſpect for the laws, nor the ſeverity of the divine juſtice, nor the dread of the judgments of the Almighty, nor the thoughts of a Hell hereafter, of which theſe barbarians exhibit a very ſtriking picture, have been able to avail. But it is time to turn away our eyes from ſo diſagreeable a ſpeculation.

The chief part of the peltry or fur-trade, after the northern and weſtern nations left off frequenting the city of the *Three Rivers*, was for ſome time carried on at Montreal, whither the Indians reſorted at certain ſeaſons from all parts of Canada. This was a kind of fair, which drew great numbers of French to this city. The governor-general and intendant came hither likewiſe, and made uſe of thoſe occaſions to ſettle any differences which might have happened amongſt our allies. But ſhould your Grace happen by chance to light on la Hontan's book, where he treats of this fair, I muſt caution you to be on your guard leſt you take every thing he ſays of it for matter of fact. He has even forgot to give it ſo much as an air of probability. The women of Montreal never gave any ground for what this author lays to their charge, and there is no reaſon to fear for their honour with reſpect to the Indians. It is without example that any of them have ever taken the leaſt liberty with any French woman, even when they have been their priſoners. They have never been ſubject to the leaſt temptation by them,

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and it were to be wiſhed, that Frenchmen had the ſame diſtaſte of the Indian women. La Hontan could not be ignorant of what is notorious to the whole country; but he had a mind to render his account entertaining; on which account every thing true or falſe was the ſame to him. One is always ſure of pleaſing ſome people of a certain caſt, by obſerving no meaſure in the liberty one aſſumes of inventing, calumniating, and in our way of expreſſing ourſelves on certain topicks.

There are ſtill now and then companies or rather flotillas of Indians arriving at Montreal, but nothing in compariſon of what uſed to reſort hither in time paſt. The war of the Iroquois is what has interrupted the great concourſe of Indians in the colony. In order to provide againſt this evil, ſtore-houſes have been erected in the countries of moſt Indian nations, together with forts, in which there is always a governor and a garriſon, ſtrong enough to ſecure the merchandize in them. The Indians are above all things deſirous there ſhould be a gunſmith amongſt them, and in ſeveral there are miſſionaries, who would generally do more good there, were there no other Frenchmen with them beſides themſelves. It would one would think have been proper to have reſtored things upon the old footing, eſpecially as there is an univerſal peace and tranquillity all over the colony. This would have been a good means of reſtraining the *Couriers de Bois*, whoſe avidity, without mentioning all the diſorders introduced by libertiniſm, which occaſions a thouſand meanneſſes, which render us contemptible to the barbarians, has lowered the price of our commodities, and raiſed that of their peltry. Beſides that, the Indians, who are by nature haughty, have grown inſolent

lent ſince they have ſeen themſelves courted by us.

The fiſhery is much more likely and proper to enrich Canada than the fur-trade; which is alſo entirely independent of the Indians. There are two reaſons for applying to this, which, however, have not been able to induce our planters to make it the principal object of their commerce. I have nothing to add, to what I have already had the honour to tell you with reſpect to the cod-fiſhery, which is alone worth more than a Peru, had the founders of New France taken proper meaſures to ſecure the poſſeſſion of it to us. I begin with that of the ſea-wolf, ſea-cow, and porpoiſe, which may be carried on over all the gulf of St. Lawrence, and even a great way up that river.

The ſea-wolf owes its name to its cry, which is a ſort of howling, for as to its figure it has nothing of the wolf, nor of any known land animal. Leſcarbot affirms, that he has heard ſome of them, whoſe cry reſembled that of a ſcreech-owl; but this might poſſibly have been the cry of young ones, whoſe voice was not as yet arrived at its full tone. Moreover, Madam, they never heſitate in this country to place the ſea-wolf in the rank of fiſhes, tho' it is far from being dumb, is brought forth on ſhore, on which it lives at leaſt as much as in the water, is covered with hair, in a word, though nothing is wanting to it, which conſtitutes an animal truly amphibious. But we are now in a new world, and it muſt not be expected we ſhould always ſpeak the language of the old, and as cuſtom, the authority of which is never diſputed, has put it in poſſeſſion of all its own rights. Thus the war which is carried on againſt the ſea-wolf, though often on ſhore,

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and with muſkets, is called a fiſhery; and that carried on againſt the beaver, though in the water, and with nets, is called hunting.

The head of the ſea-wolf reſembles pretty much that of a dog; he has four very ſhort legs, eſpecially the hind legs; in every other circumſtance he is entirely a fiſh: he rather crawls than walks on his legs; thoſe before are armed with nails, the hind being ſhaped like fins; his ſkin is hard, and is covered with a ſhort hair of various colours. There are ſome entirely white, as they are all when firſt brought forth; ſome grow black, and others red, as they grow older, and others again of both colours together.

The fiſhermen diſtinguiſh ſeveral ſorts of ſea-wolves; the largeſt weigh two thouſand weight, and it is pretended have ſharper ſnouts than the reſt. There are ſome of them which flounce only in water; our ſailors call them *braſſeurs*, as they call another ſort *nau*, of which I neither know the origin nor meaning. Another ſort are called *Groſſes têtes*, *Thick-heads*. Some of their young are very alert, and dextrous in breaking the nets ſpread for them; theſe are of a greyiſh colour, are very gameſome, full of mettle, and as handſome as an animal of this figure can be; the Indians accuſtom them to follow them like little dogs, and eat them nevertheleſs.

M. Denis mentions two ſorts of ſea-wolves, which he found on the coaſts of Acadia; one of them, ſays he, are ſo very large, that their young ones are bigger than our largeſt hogs. He adds, that a little while after they are brought forth, the parents lead them to the water, and from time to time conduct

conduct them back on ſhore to ſuckle them; that this fiſhery is carried on in the month of February, when the young ones, which they are not deſirous of catching, ſcarce ever go to the water; thus on the firſt alarm the old ones take to flight, making a prodigious noiſe to advertiſe their young, that they ought to follow them, which ſummons they never fail to obey, provided the fiſhermen do not quickly ſtop them by a knock on the ſnout with a ſtick, which is ſufficient to kill them. The number of theſe animals upon that coaſt muſt needs be prodigious; if it is true, what the ſame author aſſures us, that eight hundred of theſe young ones have been taken in one day.

The ſecond ſort mentioned by M. Denys are very ſmall, one of them yielding only a quantity of oil ſufficient to fill its own bladder. Theſe laſt never go to any diſtance from the ſea-ſhore, and have always one of their number upon duty by way of ſentry. At the firſt ſignal he gives, they all plunge into the ſea; ſome time after they approach the land, and raiſe themſelves on their hind legs, to ſee whether there is any danger; but in ſpite of all their precautions great numbers of them are ſurprized on ſhore, it being ſcarce poſſible to catch them any other way.

It is by all agreed, that the fleſh of the ſea-wolf is good eating, but it turns much better to account to make oil of it, which is no very difficult operation. They melt the blubber fat of it over the fire which diſſolves into an oil. Oftentimes they content themſelves with erecting what they call *charniers*, a name given to large ſquares of boards or plank, on which is ſpread the fleſh of a number of ſea-wolves; here it melts of itſelf, and the oil runs through

through a hole contrived for the purpoſe. This oil when freſh is good for the uſe of the kitchen, but that of the young ones ſoon grows rank; and that of the others if kept for any conſiderable time, becomes too dry. In this caſe it is made uſe of to burn, or in currying of leather. It keeps long clear, has no ſmell, ſediment, or impurity whatſoever at the bottom of the caſk.

In the infancy of the colony great numbers of the hides of ſea-wolves were made uſe of for muffs. This faſhion has long been laid aſide, ſo that the general uſe they are now put to, is the covering of trunks and cheſts. When tanned, they have almoſt the ſame grain with Morocco leather; they are not quite ſo fine, but are leſs liable to crack, and keep longer quite freſh, and look as if new. Very good ſhoes and boots have been made of them, which let in no water. They alſo cover ſeats with them, and the wood wears out before the leather; they tan theſe hides here with the bark of the oak, and in the dye ſtuff with which they uſe black, is mixed a powder made from a certain ſtone found on the banks of rivers. This is called thunder-ſtone, or marcaſite of the mines.

The ſea-wolves couple and bring forth their young on rocks, and ſometimes on the ice; their common litter is two, which they often ſuckle in the water, but oftener on ſhore; when they would teach them to ſwim they carry them, ſay they, on their backs, then throw them off in the water, afterwards taking them up again, and continue this ſort of inſtruction till the young ones are able to ſwim alone. If this is true, it is an odd ſort of fiſh, and which nature ſeems not to have inſtructed in what moſt ſort of land animals do the moment

they are brought forth. The ſea-wolf has very acute ſenſes, which are his ſole means of defence; he is, however, often ſurprized in ſpite of all his vigilance, as I have already taken notice; but the moſt common way of catching them is the following.

It is the cuſtom of this animal to enter the creeks with the tide; when the fiſhermen have found out ſuch creeks to which great numbers of ſea-wolves reſort, they encloſe them with ſtakes and nets, leaving only a ſmall opening for the ſea-wolves to enter; as ſoon as it is high-water they ſhut this opening, ſo that when the tide goes out the fiſhes remain a dry, and are eaſily diſpatched. They alſo follow them in canoes to the places to which many of them reſort, and fire upon them when they raiſe their heads above water to breathe. If they happen to be no more than wounded they are eaſily taken; but if killed outright, they immediately ſink to the bottom, like the beavers; but they have large dogs bred to this exerciſe, which fetch them from the bottom in ſeven or eight fathom water. Laſtly, I have been told, that a ſailor having one day ſurpriſed a vaſt herd of them aſhore, drove them before him to his lodgings with a ſwitch, as he would have done a flock of ſheep, and that he with his comrades killed to the number of nine hundred of them. *Sit fides penes autorem.*

Our fiſhermen now take very few ſea-cows, on the coaſts of the gulf of St. Lawrence; and I do not certainly know whether any of them have ever been catched any where elſe. The Engliſh formerly ſet up a fiſhery of this ſort on the iſland *de Sable*, but without any degree of ſucceſs. The figure of this animal is not very different from that of the

ſea-

ſea-wolf, but it is larger. What is peculiar to it is two teeth of the thickneſs and length of a man's arm, bending ſomewhat upwards, which one might eaſily miſtake for horns, and from which theſe animals probably had the name of ſea-cows. The ſailors have a ſimpler name for them, which is, the beaſt with the great tooth. This tooth is a very fine ivory, as well as all the reſt in the jaws of this fiſh, and which are four fingers long.

There are two ſorts of porpoiſes in the river St. Lawrence; thoſe found in ſalt-water, that is, from a little below the Iſle of Orleans, are exactly the ſame with thoſe found in the ocean. Thoſe in freſh water are perfectly white, and of the ſize of a cow; the firſt ſort commonly go in herds; I have not obſerved this circumſtance in the other ſort, though I have ſeen many of them playing in the port of Quebec. They never go higher than this city; but there are many of them on the coaſts of Acadia, as well as of the firſt ſort, ſo that the difference of colour cannot proceed from the different qualities of freſh and ſalt-water.

The white porpoiſe yields a hogſhead of oil, which is of much the ſame quality with that drawn from the ſea-wolf. I have never found any perſon that had taſted the fleſh of this animal, but as for thoſe called dorcelles, a name given the grey porpoiſe, their fleſh is ſaid to be no bad eating; they make puddings and ſauſages of their guts; the pluck is excellent fricaſied, and the head preferable to that of a ſheep, though inferior to a calf's.

The ſkins of both are tanned and dreſſed like Morocco-leather; at firſt it is as tender as lard or fat, and is an inch thick; they ſhave it down thin-

ner for a conſiderable while, till it becomes a tranſparent ſkin; and let it be made ever ſo thin, even ſo as to be fit for making into waiſtecoats and breeches, it is always exceſſive ſtrong and muſket-proof. There are of them eighteen feet long and nine broad; it is affirmed that there is nothing exceeds it for covering coaches.

There have been two porpoiſe fiſheries lately ſet up below Quebec, one in the bay of St. Paul, and the other ſeven or eight leagues lower down, oppoſite to a habitation called *Camouraſca*, from certain rocks, riſing to a conſiderable height above water. The expence is no great affair, and the profits would be conſiderable, were the porpoiſes animals haunting particular parts; but whether from inſtinct or caprice, they always find means to break all the meaſures of the fiſhermen, and to take a different rout from that where they are expected. Beſides theſe fiſheries, which only enrich particular perſons, occaſion a general outcry among the people, which is owing to their having cauſed a conſiderable diminution in the fiſhery for eels, an article of great benefit to the poor. For the porpoiſes finding themſelves diſturbed below Quebec, have retired elſewhere, and the eels no longer finding thoſe large fiſhes in their way, ſwim down the river without any hindrance; from whence it is, that between Quebec and the Three Rivers, where prodigious quantities of them were caught formerly, there are now none caught at all.

The way of fiſhing for the porpoiſe is little different from that I laſt mentioned with reſpect to the ſea-wolf: when the tide is out, they plant pretty near each other in the mud or ſand ſtakes to which they tie nets in the form of a pouch the opening

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of which is tolerably large; but that in ſuch manner, that when the fiſh has once paſſed through it, he cannot find his way out again; there are green branches placed at top of the ſtakes. When the flood comes, theſe fiſhes which give chace to the herrings, which always make towards the ſhore, and are allured by the verdure which they are extremely fond of, and intangled in the nets, where they are kept priſoners. In proportion as the tide ebbs, you have the pleaſure of ſeeing their confuſion and fruitleſs ſtruggles to eſcape. In a word, they remain a dry, and ſometimes heaped upon one another in ſuch numbers, that with one ſtroke of a ſtick you may knock down two or three of them. It is affirmed, that amongſt the white ſort ſome have been found to weigh three thouſand weight.

No body is ignorant of the manner of carrying on the whale-fiſhery, for which reaſon I ſhall take no notice of it; it is here ſaid, that the Baſques or people of Bayonne in France, have left it over, only that they might give themſelves up entirely to the fur-trade, which requires neither ſo large an expence, nor ſo much fatigue, and whereof the profits were then more conſiderable as well as ſooner returned. But they wanted many conveniencies for carrying it on, which are to be had now, there being ſo many ſettlements a great way towards the gulf. There has ſome years ſince been an attempt to re-eſtabliſh it, but without ſucceſs; the undertakers either wanted the neceſſary funds for making the advances, or elſe wanted to reimburſe the ſums they had laid out too ſoon, or wanted conſtancy. It appears, however, that this commerce might become highly uſeful to the colony, and that it might be carried on with much inferior expence and danger than on the coaſt of Greenland. What ſhould

hinder it even from being fixed and carried on from ſhore, as M. Denys propoſed to carry on the cod-fiſhery in Acadia. This is, Madam, what I have to ſay with regard to the fiſheries of Canada: I will inform you of ſome others, after I ſhall have taken notice of their manner of living in this country.

*I have the honour to be*, &c.

LETTER

# LETTER IX.

*Of fort* Chambly, *with the fiſhes, birds, and ſeveral animals peculiar to* Canada. *Of trees common to it with* France, *and of ſuch as are peculiar to this country.*

*Chambly, April* 11, 1721.

*Madam,*

ONE of the principal ſecurities and bulwarks of Montreal againſt the Iroquois and New-York, is the fort of Chambly, from which I now have the honour to write you. I came here to pay a viſit to the commandant, who is M. de *Sabrevois*, one of the beſt families of Beauce, and my friend, fellow-paſſenger, and a good officer. I am going in two words to give you the ſituation and deſcription of this important place.

In the firſt years of our ſettling in this country, the Iroquois, that they might make incurſions even as far as the center of our plantations, came down a river which empties itſelf into the St. Lawrence, a little above St. Peter, and which had for this reaſon given it the name of *the River of the Iroquois.* It has been ſince called *Richelieu River*, on account

of a fort of this name, that had been built at its mouth. This fort having been demoliſhed, M. de Sorel, captain in the regiment of Carignan Salieres, cauſed build another, to which his name was given; this name has been ſince extended to the river, which ſtill retains it, though the fort has long ceaſed to exiſt. After ſailing up this river about ſeventeen leagues, always ſtretching towards the ſouth, and a little towards to the ſouth-weſt, you come to a *rapide*, and oppoſite to it, a little lake formed by the ſame river. On the banks of this *rapide*, and oppoſite to the lake, the fort is placed. This was at firſt built of wood by M. de Chambly, captain in the above-mentioned regiment, and at the time when M. de Sorel built the other. But it has ſince been built of ſtone, and flanked with four baſtions, and has always a ſtrong garriſon. The lands round it are excellent, they begin to make plantations, and many are of opinion that in time a city will be built here.

From Chambly to lake Champlain there are only eight leagues; the river Sorel croſſes this lake, and there is not perhaps a canton in all New France, which it would be more proper to people. The climate here is milder than in any part of the colony, and the inhabitants will have for neighbours, the Iroquois, who are, at bottom, a good ſort of people enough, who will, probably, never think of coming to a rupture with us, after they ſhall ſee us in ſuch a condition as not to fear them, and who, in my opinion would like us much better for neighbours than the people of New-York. There are many other reaſons to induce us to make this ſettlement; but were I to mention all, I ſhould leave myſelf nothing to tell you when I have the honour to ſee you. I am going to make uſe of the leiſure

I have here to continue my account of ſuch things as are peculiar to this country. I left off at the article of the benefit which the gulph and river of St. Lawrence are capable of furniſhing with reſpect to the commerce of New France. It remains to treat of the reſources the inhabitants may find for the ſupport of life in theſe parts.

In all parts where the water of the river is ſalt, that is from cape *Tourmente* to the gulf, may be caught ſuch fiſhes as are found in the ocean; ſuch as the ſalmon, tunny, ſhad fiſh, ſmelt, ſea-eels, mackerel, trout, lamprey, ſole, herring, anchovy, pilchard, turbot, and many others, unknown in Europe. They are all caught with nets of different forms. In the gulph are caught thraſhers, three ſorts of *Rayes*; the common, that called *Bouclee*, and which is by ſome preferred to ours in France; and the ſort termed *le Poſteau*, not eſteemed; lencornets, a kind of cuttle-fiſh; *Gobergues*, or St. Peter-fiſh; plaiſe, requiems, ſea-dogs, another ſort of requiem not ſo miſchievous when alive, and better beyond compariſon when dead. Oiſters are extremely plenty in winter, on all the coaſts of Acadia, and their way of fiſhing them is very ſingular. They make a hole in the ice, through which they put two poles tied together, ſo as to play like pincers, and rarely draw them up without an oiſter.

I ſaid the lencornet was a find of cuttle-fiſh, its figure is, however, very different from the common ſort of them. It is quite round, or rather oval; it has above the tail, a ſort of border, which ſerves it inſtead of a target, and its head is ſurrounded with prickles half a foot long, which he uſes to catch other fiſhes; there are two ſorts of them which differ only in ſize; ſome are as large as

a hogſhead, and others but a foot long; they catch only theſe laſt, and that with a torch; they are very fond of light, they hold it out to them from the ſhore at high-water, and they come to it, and ſo are left a-ground. The lencornet roaſted, boiled, or fricaſied, is excellent eating; but it makes the ſauce quite black.

The gobergue reſembles a ſmall cod. It has the ſame taſte, and is dried like it. It has two black ſpots on each ſide the head, and the ſailors tell you that this is the fiſh in which St. Peter found money to pay the Roman emperor's tribute for our Lord and himſelf, and that theſe two ſpots are the two places by which he held it; this is the reaſon it has got the name of St. Peter's fiſh. The ſea-plaiſe has firmer fleſh and is of a better reliſh than the freſh water ſort; this is taken as well as the lobſter or ſea-crab, with long poles armed with a pointed iron, ending in a fork or hook which hinders the fiſh from getting looſe. Laſtly, in ſeveral places, eſpecially in Acadia, the pools are full of ſalmon trouts a foot long, and of turtles two foot diameter, the fleſh of which is excellent, and the upper ſhell, ſtriped with white, red, and blue.

Amongſt the fiſhes which lake Champlain, and the rivers falling into it, abound, M. Champlain remarks one ſingular enough, called *Chaouraſou*; probably from the name given it by the Indians. This is a ſpecies of the armed fiſh, which is found in ſeveral other places; this is in figure pretty much like a pike, only it is covered with ſcales which are proof againſt a dagger; its colour is a ſilver grey, and from under its throat proceeds a bone which is flat, indented, hollow, and pierced or open at the end, from which it is probable the animal breathes

breathes through this. The ſkin which covers this bone is tender, and its length is in proportion to that of the fiſh, of which it is one third part. Its breadth is two fingers in thoſe of the ſmalleſt ſize. The Indians aſſured M. Champlain they had found ſome of thoſe fiſhes from eight to ten feet broad; but the largeſt of thoſe he ſaw were not above five, and were as thick as a man's thigh.

We may well imagine this to be a real pirate amongſt the inhabitants of the waters; but no body could ever dream that he is full as dangerous an enemy to the citizens of the air; this is, however, one of his trades, in which he acts like an able huntſman; the way he does it is as follows. He conceals himſelf amongſt the canes or reeds, in ſuch manner, that nothing is to be ſeen, beſides his weapon, which he holds raiſed perpendicularly above the ſurface of the water. The fowl which come to take reſt imagining this weapon to be only a withered reed, make no ſcruple of perching upon it. They are no ſooner alighted than the fiſh opens his throat, and ſo ſuddenly makes at his prey, that it rarely eſcapes him. The teeth which are placed on the ſides of the bone, which he uſes ſo dexterouſly, are pretty long and very ſharp. The Indians pretend they are a ſovereign remedy againſt the toothach, and that by pricking the part moſt affected with one of theſe teeth the pain vaniſhes that inſtant.

Theſe people have a wonderful addreſs in darting fiſhes under water, eſpecially in rapid currents. They alſo fiſh with the boſom net, and prepare themſelves for it by a ceremony ſingular enough. Before they uſe this net they marry it to two girls who

who are virgins, and during the marriage-feaſt, place it between the two brides; they afterwards exhort it to catch plenty of fiſh, and believe they do a great deal to obtain this favour, by making large preſents to the ſham fathers-in-law.

The ſturgeon of this country is both a freſh and ſalt-water fiſh; for it is caught on the coaſts of Canada, and in the great lakes croſs which the river St. Lawrence runs. Many believe this to be the true dolphin of the antients; if this is true, it was but fit the king of fiſhes ſhould reign both in the rivers and ocean. Be this as it will, we ſee here ſturgeons of from eight to ten, and twelve feet long, and of a proportionable thickneſs. This animal has on its head a ſort of crown about an inch high, and is covered with ſcales half a foot diameter, almoſt oval, and with ſmall figures on them, pretty much like the lily in the arms of France. The following is the way the Indians fiſh for them in the lakes. Two men place themſelves in the two extremities of a canoe; the next the ſtern ſteers, the other ſtanding up holding a dart to which is tied a long cord, the other extremity whereof is faſtened to one of the croſs timbers of the canoe. The moment he ſees the ſturgeon within reach of him, he lances his dart at him, and endeavours, as much as poſſible, to hit in the place that is without ſcales. If the fiſh happens to be wounded, he flies and draws the canoe after him with extreme velocity; but after he has ſwam the diſtance of an hundred and fifty paces or thereabouts, he dies, and then, they draw up the line and take him. There is a ſmall ſort of ſturgeon, the fleſh of which is exceeding tender, and prodigious delicate.

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The river St. Lawrence breeds ſeveral fiſhes, altogether unknown in France. Thoſe moſt eſteemed are the *Achigau* and the *Gilthead*. The other rivers of Canada, and eſpecially thoſe of Acadia, are equally well provided with this river, perhaps, the moſt plentifully ſtocked with fiſh in the whole world, and in which there is the greateſt variety of different and thoſe the beſt ſorts.

There are ſome ſeaſons in which the fiſhes in this river are alone capable of ſuſtaining the whole colony. But I am utterly at a loſs, what degree of credit ought to be given to what I have read in a manuſcript relation of an ancient miſſionary, who aſſerts, his having ſeen a Homme marin, or mermaid in the river Sorel, three leagues below Chambly; this relation is wrote with abundance of judgment; but in order to ſtate the matter of fact, and to prove that he has not been deceived by a falſe and haſty appearance, the author ought to have added to his account a deſcription of this monſter. People have often at firſt look apprehended they ſaw the appearance of ſomething, which vaniſhes on the careful ſcrutiny of a ſage eye. Beſides, had this fiſh ſo reſembling a human creature come from the ſea, he muſt have made a long voyage before he got up as high as near Chambly, and it muſt have been extraordinary enough he was never ſeen till he arrived at this fortreſs.

The foreſts of Canada are far from being as well peopled with birds, as our lakes and rivers are with fiſhes. There are ſome, however, which are not without their merit, and which are even peculiar to the Americans. We find here eagles of two ſorts; the largeſt have the head and neck almoſt quite white; they give chace to the hares and rabbits, take them

them in their talons, and carry them to their neſts and airies. The reſt are entirely grey, and only make war on birds. They are all excellent fiſhers. The falcon, the goſs-hawk, and taſſel, are abſolutely the ſame with thoſe of Europe; but we have here a ſecond ſort of them, which live ſolely by fiſhing.

Our partridges are of three ſorts; the grey, red, and black partridge. The laſt are the leaſt eſteemed; they ſavour too much of the grape, juniper, and fir-tree. They have the head and eyes of a pheaſant, and their fleſh is brown; they have all long tails, which they ſpread like a fan, or like the tail of a turkey-cock. Theſe tails are exceeding beautiful; ſome of them are a mixture of grey, red, and brown; others are that of a light and dark brown. I ſaid the black partridge was not eſteemed; ſome there are, however, who prefer them even to the red ſort; they are all bigger than ours in France, but ſo ſtupidly fooliſh as to ſuffer themſelves to be ſhot, and even to let you come near them, almoſt without ſtirring.

Beſides ſnipes which are excellent in this country, and ſmall water-game, which is every where in great plenty, you meet with ſome woodcocks about ſpring, but thoſe in no great numbers. In the country of the Illinois, and all over the ſouthern parts of New France, they are more common. M. Denys aſſerts, that the raven of Canada is as good eating as a pullet. This may be true on the coaſts of Acadia; but I don't find people of this opinion in theſe parts; they are larger than in France, ſomething blacker, and have a different cry from ours. The oſpray, on the contrary is ſmaller, and their cry not ſo diſagreeable. The owl of Canada has no

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difference from that of France, but a ſmall ring of white round the neck, and a particular kind of cry. Its fleſh is good eating, and many prefer it to that of a pullet. In winter, its proviſions are field mice, the legs of which he breaks, feeds carefully, and fattens till he wants them. The bat here is larger than that of France. The blackbird and ſwallow are in this country birds of paſſage, as in Europe; the former are not a deep black, but inclining to red. We have three ſorts of larks the ſmalleſt of which are like ſparrows. This laſt is little different from ours; he has quite the ſame inclinations, but his mien is very indifferent.

There are in this country vaſt multitudes of wild-ducks, of which I have heard reckoned to the number of two and twenty different ſpecies. The moſt beautiful and the moſt delicate eating are thoſe called *Canards Branchus*, or bough wild ducks, from their perching on the boughs of trees. Their plumage is extreamly variegated, and very brilliant. Swans, turkey-cocks, water-hens, cranes, teale, geeſe, buſtards, and other large water-fowl, ſwarm every where, except near our habitations, which they never approach. We have cranes of two colours; ſome quite white, and others of a light grey. They all make excellent ſoop. Our woodpecker is an animal of extreme beauty; there are ſome of all manner of colours, and others quite black, or of a dark brown all over the body, except the head and neck, which are of a beautiful red.

The thruſh of Canada is much the ſame with that of France as to ſhape, but has only one half his muſick; the wren has robbed him of the other half. The goldfinch has the head leſs beautiful than that of France, and its plumage is a mixture of

black and yellow. As I have never ſeen any of them in a cage, I can ſay nothing of his ſong. All our woods are full of a bird of the ſize of a linnet, which is quite yellow, and has a delightful pipe; his ſong, however, is but ſhort, and without variety. This has no name to diſtinguiſh it, but that of its colour. A ſort of ortolan, the plumage of which is of an aſh-colour on the back, and white under the belly, and which is called the *white-bird*, is, of all the gueſts in our foreſts the beſt ſongſter. This yields not to the nightingale of France, but the male only is overheard to ſing; the female which is of a deeper colour, utters not a ſingle note even in a cage; this ſmall animal is of a very beautiful mien, and well deſerves the name of ortolan for its flavour. I know not whither he bends his courſe in the winter; but he is always the firſt to return, and to proclaim the approach of the ſpring. The ſnow is ſcarce melted in ſome parts, when they flock thither in great numbers, and then you may take as many of them as you pleaſe.

You muſt travel a hundred leagues to the ſouthward of this place before you meet with any of the birds called cardinals. There are ſome in Paris which have been brought thither from Louiſiana, and I think they might thrive in France, could they breed like the canary bird; the ſweetneſs of their ſong, the brilliancy of their plumage, which is of a ſhining ſcarlet incarnate; the little tuft on their heads, and which is no bad reſemblance of the crowns the painters give to Indian and American kings, ſeem to promiſe them the empire of the airy tribe; they have, however, a rival in this country, who would even have the unanimous voice of every one, were his pipe as grateful to the ear as his outward appearance is to the ſight; this is

what

what is called in this country *l'Oiſeau Mouche*, or the Fly-bird.

This name has two derivations; the firſt is that of the ſmallneſs of the animal; for with all its plumage, its volume is no larger than that of an ordinary May-bug. The ſecond is a loud ſort of humming noiſe, which he makes with his wings, and which is not unlike that of a large fly; its legs which are about an inch long are like two needles; his bill is of the ſame thickneſs, and from it he ſends forth a ſmall ſting, with which he pierces the flowers, in order to extract the ſap, which is his nouriſhment. The female has nothing ſtriking in her appearance, is of a tolerable agreeable white under the belly, and of a bright grey all over the reſt of the body; but the male is a perfect jewel, he has on the crown of his head a ſmall tuft of the moſt beautiful black, the breaſt red, the belly white, the back, wings, and tail of a green, like that of the leaves of the roſe-buſh; ſpecks of gold, ſcattered all over the plumage, add a prodigious *eclat* to it, and an imperceptible down produces on it the moſt delightful ſhadings that can poſſibly be ſeen.

Some travellers have confounded this bird with the *Coliby*; and in fact, this bird ſeems to be a ſpecies of it. But the coliby of the iſlands is ſomething bigger, has not ſo much livelineſs of colour in his plumage, and his bill is a little bent downwards. I might, however, be miſtaken with regard to the brightneſs and luſtre of his plumage, as I never ſaw any of them alive: ſome affirm he has a melodious pipe; if this is true, he has a great advantage over the oiſeau mouche, which no one

has as yet ever heard to ſing; but I myſelf have heard a female one whiſtle notes exceeding ſhrill and diſagreeable. This bird has an extremely ſtrong and an amazingly rapid flight; you behold him on ſome flower, and in a moment he will dart upwards into the air almoſt perpendicularly; it is an enemy to the raven, and a dangerous one too. I have heard a man worthy of credit affirm, that he has ſeen one boldly quit a flower he was ſucking, lance himſelf upwards into the air like lightning, get under the wing of a raven that lay motionleſs on his extended wings at a vaſt height, pierce it with his his ſting, and make him tumble down dead, either of his fall or the wound he had received.

The oiſeau mouche ſelects ſuch flowers as are of the ſtrongeſt ſcent, and ſucks them, always hopping about at the ſame time; he, however, alights now and then to reſt himſelf when we have an opportunity of beholding him at our leiſure. Some of them have been kept for ſome time, by feeding them with ſugar-water and flowers; I formerly kept one of them for twenty-four hours; he ſuffered himſelf to be taken and handled, and counterfeited himſelf dead; the moment I let him go, he flew away, and continued fluttering about my window. I made a preſent of him to a friend, who found him dead the next morning, and that very night there was a little froſt. Thus theſe diminutive animals are extremely watchful to prevent the firſt advent of cold weather.

There is great reaſon to think, that they retire to Carolina, where we are aſſured they are never ſeen but in winter; they make their neſts in Canada, where they ſuſpend them on the branch of ſome

tree, and turn them towards ſuch an expoſure, that they are ſheltered from all the injuries of the air and weather. Nothing can be neater than theſe neſts. The foundation conſiſts of tiny bits of wood interwoven baſket-wiſe, and the inſide is lined with I don't know what ſort of down, which ſeems to be ſilk; their eggs are of the ſize of a pea, with yellow ſpots on a black ground. Their common litter is ſaid to be three and ſometimes five.

Amongſt the reptiles of this country, I know of none as yet but the rattle ſnake, that merits the leaſt attention. There are ſome of them as thick as a man's leg, and ſometimes thicker, and long in proportion; but there are others, and thoſe I believe the greater number, which are neither longer nor thicker than our largeſt ſnakes of France; their figure is abundantly odd; on a neck, which is flat and very broad, they have but a ſmall head. Their colour is lively without being dazzling, and a pale yellow, with very beautiful ſhades, is the colour which predominates.

But the moſt remarkable part of this animal is its tail; this is ſcaly like a coat of mail, ſomewhat flattiſh, and it grows, ſay they, every year a row of ſcales; thus its age may be known by its tail, as that of a horſe is by his teeth; when he ſtirs he makes the ſame noiſe with his tail as the graſhopper does when he leaps or flies; for your Grace, no doubt knows, that the pretended muſick of the graſhopper is no more than the noiſe of his wings. Moreover, the reſemblance I ſpeak of is ſo perfect, that I have been deceived with it myſelf. It is from this noiſe, this ſort of ſerpent has obtained the name it bears.

Its bite is mortal, if the remedy be not applied immediately, but Providence has provided againſt this misfortune. In all places where this dangerous reptile is found, there grows an herb, called the rattle-ſnake plant, *Herbe a ſerpent a ſonettes*, the root of which is a never-failing antidote againſt the venom of this animal. You have only to bray or chew it, and to apply it in the nature of a plaiſter upon the wound. This plant is beautiful and eaſily known. Its ſtem is round, and ſomewhat thicker than a gooſe quill, riſes to the height of three or four feet, and terminates in a yellow flower of the figure and ſize of a ſingle daiſy; this flower has a very ſweet ſcent, the leaves of the plant are oval, narrow, ſuſtained, five and five, in form of a turkey cock's foot, by a pedicle, or foot-ſtalk an inch long.

The rattle-ſnake rarely attacks any paſſenger who gives him no provocation. I had one juſt at my foot, which was certainly more afraid than I was, for I did not perceive him till he was flying. But ſhould you tread on him you are ſure to be bitten, and if you purſue him, if he has ever ſo little time to recover himſelf, he folds himſelf up in a circle with his head in the middle, and darts himſelf with great force againſt his enemy. The Indians, however, give chace to him, and eſteem his fleſh excellent. I have even heard Frenchmen, who had eaten of it, ſay, that it was no bad eating; but they were travellers, a ſort of cattle who hold every thing excellent, being often expoſed to be extreme hungry. It is, however, for certain, abundantly innocent food.

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I don't know, Madam, whither I ought to entertain you with an account of the foreſts of Canada. We are here ſurrounded with the vaſteſt woods in the whole world; in all appearance, they are as ancient as the world itſelf, and were never planted by the hand of man. Nothing can preſent a nobler or more magnificent proſpect to the eyes, the trees hide their tops in the clouds, and the variety of different ſpecies of them is ſo prodigious, that even amongſt all thoſe who have moſt applied themſelves to the knowledge of them, there is not perhaps one who is not ignorant of at leaſt one half of them. As to their quality, and the uſes to which they may be applied, their ſentiments are ſo different, both in the country in which we now are, as well as in that where your grace is, that I deſpair of being ever able to give you the information I could deſire on this head. At preſent, at leaſt I ought to confine myſelf to ſome obſervations on what I have myſelf ſeen, and on what I have heard people who have more experience ſay, and who are greater adepts in this ſcience.

What moſt ſtruck my eyes on my firſt arrival in this country, was, the pines, fir-trees, and cedars, which are of a height and thickneſs perfectly aſtoniſhing. There are two ſorts of pines in this country, all of them yielding a reſinous ſubſtance very fit for making pitch and tar. The white pines, at leaſt ſome of them, ſhoot out at the upper extremity a kind of muſhroom, which the inhabitants call Guarigûe, and which the Indians uſe with ſucceſs againſt diſorders in the breaſt and in the dyſentery. The red pines are more gummy and heavier, but do not grow to ſuch a thickneſs. The lands which produce both are not the moſt proper

for bearing of corn; they are generally a mixture of gravel, ſand, and clay.

There are four ſorts of fir-trees in Canada; the firſt reſembles ours; the three others are the Epinette Blanche, and Epinette Rouge, or the White and Red Prickly firs, and that called *la Peruſſe*. The ſecond and fourth ſorts riſe to a vaſt height, and are excellent for maſts, eſpecially the white prickly ſort, which are alſo extremely fit for carpenter's work. This grows generally in moiſt, and black lands, but which after being drained, are fit for bearing all ſorts of grain. Its bark is ſmooth and ſhining, and there grows on it a kind of ſmall bliſters of the ſize of kidney-beans, which contain a kind of turpentine, which is ſovereign in wounds, which it cures ſpeedily, and even in fractures. We are aſſured that it cures fevers, and pains in the breaſt and ſtomach; the way to uſe it is to put two drops of it in ſome broth. This is what is called in Paris *White Baſam*.

The epinette rouge has ſcarce any reſemblance to the epinette blanche. Its wood is heavy, and may be of good uſe in ſhip-building, and in carpenter's work. The lands where it grows are a mixture of gravel and clay. The peruſſe is gummy, but yields not a quantity ſufficient to be made uſe of; its wood remains long in the ground without rotting, which renders it extremely fit for paling or incloſures. The bark is excellent for tanners, and the Indians make a dye of it, reſembling that of a turky-blue. Moſt of the lands where this tree grows are clayey; I have, however, ſeen ſome very thick ones in ſandy-grounds, though perhaps there was clay under the ſand.

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The cedar is of two ſorts, the white and the red; the former are the thickeſt of the two; of theſe are made palings, and this too is the wood moſt commonly made uſe of for ſhingles, on account of its lightneſs. There diſtills a ſort of incenſe from it, but it is without any fruit like thoſe of Mount Libanus. The red cedar is ſhorter and thinner in proportion. The moſt ſenſible difference between them, is, that all the odour of the former is in the leaves, and that of the ſecond in its wood; but the latter is the more agreeable flavour. The cedar, at leaſt the white ſort grows only in good ground.

There are all over Canada two ſorts of oaks, diſtinguiſhed by the names of the white and red oaks. The firſt are often found in lands which are low, ſwampy, fertile, and proper for producing corn and legumes. The red, the wood of which is the leaſt eſteemed, grow in dry ſandy lands, both of them bear acorns. The maple is likewiſe very common in Canada, is very large and is made into good furniture; this grows on high grounds, and ſuch as are fit for bearing fruit-trees, which they call *Rhene*. Here is the female maple, the wood of which is ſtreaked and clouded very much, but is paler than the male; beſides it has all its qualities as well as its colour; but it muſt have a moiſt and rich ſoil.

The cherry-tree, which is found promiſcuouſly amongſt the maple and white wood-trees, is very fit for making furniture; it yields a much greater quantity of juice than the maple, but this is bitter and the ſugar made of it never loſes this quality. The Indians uſe its bark againſt certain diſeaſes,

which are incident to women. There are in Canada, three ſorts of aſh-trees; the free, the mongrel, and the baſtard. The firſt grows among maples is fit for carpenter's work, and for ſtaves for dry ware caſks. The ſecond has the ſame qualities, and like the baſtard, will grow only in low and good lands.

They reckon alſo in this country three ſorts of walnut-trees, the hard, the ſoft, and a third ſort which has a very thin bark. The hard ſort bears a very ſmall walnut, good to eat, but very coſtive. The wood is only fit for fire-wood. The tender, bears a long fruit, as large as thoſe in France, but the ſhell is very hard The kernels of them are excellent. The wood is not ſo pretty as ours; but to make amends it is almoſt incorruptible in water, or in the ground, and is difficult to conſume in the fire. The third produces a nut of the ſame ſize with the firſt, but in greater quantity, and which is bitter, and incloſed in a very tender huſk; they make excellent oil of it. This tree yields a ſweeter ſap than that of the maple, but in a ſmall quantity. This grows only, as doth the ſoft walnut tree, in the beſt lands.

The beech is here ſo plentiful, that whole tracts are covered with them; I have ſeen them growing on ſandy hills, and in exceeding fertile low lands. They bear great quantities of nuts, from which it would be an eaſy matter to extract an oil. The bears make this their principal nouriſhment, as do alſo the partridges. The wood of it is exceeding tender, and very fit for oars and for ſhallops. But thoſe of canoes are made of maple. The tree called white-wood, which grows amongſt maples, and

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the cherry-tree is exceeding plentiful. Theſe trees grow to a great thickneſs and very ſtrait; very good planks and boards may be made of them, and even ſtaves for dry ware caſks. It is ſoft and eaſily worked; the Indians peel off the bark of this tree to cover their cabins.

Elms are very plenty all over this country. There are white and red elms; the wood of this tree is difficult to work but laſts longeſt. The bark of the red elm is that of which the Iroquois make their canoes. Some of them which are made of one ſingle piece, will contain twenty perſons; ſome of them are likewiſe hollow, and to theſe the bears and wild cats retire in the month of November, and remain till April. The poplar grows commonly on the banks of rivers and on the ſea-ſhore.

In the thickeſt woods are found great numbers of prune or plumb-trees, loaden with a very ſour fruit. The vinage-tree is a very pithy ſhrub, which produces a ſour cluſtering fruit, of the colour of bullock's blood; they cauſe infuſe it in water, and make a ſort of vinegar of it. The *Pemime*, is another ſhrub growing along rivulets, and in meadows; it bears alſo a cluſtering fruit yielding a red and very aſtringent liquor. There are three ſorts of gooſeberry-trees in this country; theſe are the ſame with thoſe of France. The *Bluet* grows here as in Europe in woods. This fruit is a ſovereign and ſpeedy cure for the dyſentery. The Indians dry them as we do cherries in France.

The *Atoca* is a ſtone-fruit of the ſize of a cherry. This plant which creeps along the ground in ſwamps, pro-

produces its fruit in water; this fruit is ſharp, and is made into a confection. The white-thorn is found along rivulets, and produces a quantity of fruit with a treble kernel; this is the food of ſeveral wild beaſts. What they call here the cotton-tree, is a plant which ſprouts like aſparagus, to the heighth of about three feet, and at the end grow ſeveral tufts of flowers. In the morning before the dew has fallen off, they ſhake the flowers, and there falls from it, with the humidity, a kind of honey, which by boiling is reduced to a kind of ſugar. The ſeed is formed in a ſort of pod, which contains a kind of very fine cotton.

The *ſoleil* is another very common plant in the fields of the Indians, and which riſes to the height of ſeven or eight feet. Its flower, which is very thick has much the ſame figure with that of the marigold, and the ſeed is diſpoſed in the ſame manner; the Indians extract an oil from it by boiling, with which they anoint their hair. The legumes they cultivate moſt, are, Maize, or Turkey-corn, French-beans, gourds, and melons. They have a ſort of gourds ſmaller than ours, and which taſte much of ſugar; they boil them whole in water, or roaſt them under the aſhes, and ſo eat them without any other preparation.

The Indians were acquainted before our arrival in their country with the common and water melon. The former are as good as thoſe in France, eſpecially in this iſland, where they are in great plenty. The hop-plant and capilaire are likewiſe the natural produce of Canada; but the latter grows to a much greater height, and is infinitely better than in France. I now finiſh a letter, by which

which you may eaſily diſcover a traveller, rambling over the foreſts and plains of Canada, and who is diverted with every thing which preſents itſelf to his view. But what could you expect from one who travels through ſuch a country as this is.

*I am*, &c.

LETTER

# LETTER X.

*Of the cauſes of the exceſſive cold in* Canada. *Of the reſources it affords for the ſupport of life. The character of the* French Canadians.

*Montreal*, April 22*d*, 1721.

*Madam*,

IT is ſurpriſing, that in France, where they ſo often meet with perſons who have ſpent great part of their lives in Canada, they ſhould have ſo imperfect a notion of the country. This undoubtedly proceeds from this, that the greateſt number of thoſe, to whom they apply for information, are acquainted only with its bad ſide. The winter commonly begins before the veſſels ſet ſail in order to return to France, and always in ſuch a manner as to aſtoniſh every one except the natives of the place. The firſt froſts in a few days fill the rivers with ice, and the earth is ſoon covered with ſnow, which continues for ſix months, and is always ſix feet deep in places not expoſed to the wind.

It is true there is no want of wood to guard againſt the cold, which very ſoon becomes extreme, and encroaches greatly on the ſpring: but it is, however, ſomething extremely ſhocking, not to be able to

to ſtir out of doors without being frozen, at leaſt, without being wrapt up in furs like a bear. Moreover, what a ſpectacle is it to behold one continued tract of ſnow, which pains the ſight, and hides from your view all the beauties of nature? No more difference between the rivers and fields, no more variety, even the trees are covered with ſnow-froſt, with large icicles depending from all their branches, under which you cannot paſs with ſafety. What can a man think who ſees the horſes with beards of ice more than a foot long, and who can travel in a country, where, for the ſpace of ſix months, the bears themſelves dare not ſhew their faces to the weather? Thus I have never paſſed a winter in this country without ſeeing ſome one or other carried to the hoſpital, and who was obliged to have his legs or arms cut off on account of their being benumbed and frozen. In a word, if the ſky is clear, the wind which blows from the weſt is intolerably piercing. If it turns to the ſouth or eaſt, the weather becomes a little more moderate, but ſo thick a ſnow falls, that there is no ſeeing ten paces before you, even at noon-day. On the other hand, if a compleat thaw comes on, farewel to the yearly ſtock of capons, quarters of beef and mutton, poultry and fiſh, which they had laid up in granaries, depending on the continuance of the froſt; ſo that in ſpite of the exceſſive ſeverity of the cold, people are reduced to the neceſſity of wiſhing for its continuance.

It is in vain to ſay that the winters are not now as ſevere as they were four and twenty years ago, and that in all probability they will become ſtill milder in the ſequel: the ſufferings of thoſe who have gone before us, and the happineſs of ſuch as may come after us, are no remedies againſt a preſent evil, under

der which we ourſelves labour. What comfort would it have been to a Creole of Martinico, who had arrived in France for the firſt time during the hard froſt in 1709, ſhould I, who had juſt then returned from Quebec, have told him that the cold he now felt was ſtill inferior to that of Canada? I ſhould however have told him truth, and could have ſupported it by good evidences; but he might very well have anſwered me, that he found the cold in France not a whit the leſs piercing, by being informed it was ſtill more ſo in Canada.

But as ſoon as the month of May begins, we have reaſon to change our language, the mildneſs of this latter part of the ſpring being by ſo much the more agreeable, as it ſucceeds ſo rigorous a ſeaſon. The heat of the ſummer, which in leſs than four months, ſhews us both the ſeed and the crop *, the ſerenity of autumn, during which there is a ſeries of fine weather, very ſeldom to be ſeen, in the greateſt part of the provinces of France: all which, joined to the liberty which is enjoyed in this country, makes many find their ſtay here as agreeable as in the kingdom where they were born, and it is certain that our Canadians would without heſitation give it the preference.

After all, theſe colds ſo long and ſo ſevere, are attended with inconveniencies which can never thoroughly be remedied. I reckon in the firſt place the difficulty of feeding the cattle, which during the

* The ground is tilled in Autumn, and the ſeed ſown between the middle of April and the tenth of May. The crop is cut down between the 15th of Auguſt and 20th of September. The lands which are not tilled till the Spring yield ſmaller crops, becauſe the nitrous particles of the ſnow are not ſo well able to penetrate into them.

whole

whole winter ſeaſon can find nothing in the fields, and conſequently the preſerving them muſt be extremely expenſive, while their fleſh, after being kept ſix months on dry food, muſt have loſt almoſt all its reliſh. Corn is alſo neceſſary for the poultry, and great care muſt be taken to keep them alive during ſo long a time. If to avoid expence all thoſe beaſts are killed about the end of October, which are intended for conſumption before the month of May, you may eaſily judge how inſipid this ſort of victuals muſt be; and from the manner in which they catch fiſh through the ice, it appears this cannot be very plentiful, beſides its being frozen from the very firſt, ſo that it is almoſt impoſſible to have it freſh in the ſeaſon when it is moſt wanted. Were it not for the cod-fiſh and eels there would hardly be any ſuch thing as keeping Lent; with reſpect to butter and freſh eggs there can be no queſtion, nor indeed is much more account to be made of garden-ſtuff, which is kept as well as may be in the cellars, but loſes almoſt all its virtue after it has been there for ſome months.

Add to this, that excepting apples, which are of an excellent quality, and ſmall ſummer fruit which does not keep, the fruits natural to France have not as yet ſucceeded in Canada. Theſe, Madam, are all the diſadvantages occaſioned by this exceſſive cold ſeaſon. We are, notwithſtanding, as near the ſun as in the moſt ſourthern provinces of France, and the farther you advance into the colony, you ſtill approach the nearer to it. Whence then can ariſe this difference of temperatures under the ſame parallels of latitude? This is a queſtion, which in my opinion no one has as yet anſwered in a ſatisfactory manner.

Moſt

Moſt authors who have handled this matter are contented with ſaying that this long and ſevere cold is occaſioned by the ſnow lying ſo long on the ground, that it is not poſſible it can ever be thoroughly warmed, eſpecially in places under cover: But this anſwer removes the difficulty only one ſtep; for it may be aſked what produces this great quantity of ſnow in climates as warm as Languedoc and Provence, and in countries at a much greater diſtance from the mountains.

The Sieur Denys, whom I have already quoted oftner than once, affirms that the trees reſume their verdure before the ſun is ſufficiently elevated above the horizon to melt the ſnow or warm the earth; this may be true in Acadia, and over all the ſea coaſt, but it is certain that every where elſe the ſnow is melted in the thickeſt foreſts before there is a ſingle leaf upon the trees. This author ſeems to have no better authority for ſaying that the ſnow melts rather by the heat of the earth than that of the air, and that it always begins to melt from below: but will he perſuade any man that the earth when covered with frozen water, is warmer than the air, which immediately receives the rays of the ſun. Beſides, this is no anſwer to the queſtion about the cauſe of that deluge of ſnow which overwhelms this immenſe country ſituated in the middle of the temperate zone.

There is no queſtion but that generally ſpeaking the mountains, foreſts, and lakes contribute greatly to it, but it appears to me that we ought to ſeek out for other cauſes beſides. Father Joſeph Bretani, an Italian Jeſuit, who ſpent the beſt part of his lifetime in Canada, has left behind him in his own language, an account of New France, wherein he en-

deavours to clear up this point of natural philoſophy. He will not allow that the cold, the cauſes of which we are enquiring into, ought to be attributed to any of thoſe juſt mentioned, but methinks he goes too far; for no reply can be made to experience, which convinces us of the decreaſe of the cold, according as the country is cleared, tho' that may not happen in the proportion it ought, were the thickneſs of the woods its principal cauſe.

He himſelf confeſſes that it is no rare thing to ſee a froſty night ſucceed a very hot ſummer day; but this way of reaſoning appears to me to furniſh an argument againſt himſelf; for how can this phœnomenon be explained otherwiſe than by ſaying that the ſun having opened the pores of the earth in the day time, the humidity which was ſtill contained in it, the nitrous particles which the ſnow had left behind it in quantities, and the heat which an air equally ſubtle with that in this country ſtill preſerves after ſun-ſet, all together form theſe gentle froſts in the ſame manner as we make ice upon the fire. Beſides, the humidity of the earth has evidently a large ſhore in the exceſſive colds of this climate; but whence could this humidity proceed in a country, the ſoil of which has for the moſt a great mixture of ſand in it, if it was not from the number and extent of its lakes and rivers, the thickneſs of its foreſts, its mountains covered with ſnow, which as it melts overflows the plains, and the winds which carry the exhalations every where along with them.

But ſhould Father Bretani be miſtaken, as I believe he is, when he excludes all thoſe from being the cauſes of the exceſſive cold in Canada, yet what he ſubſtitutes in their room ſeems, in my opinion,

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to contribute greatly to it. There are, ſays he, humid ſoils in the warmeſt climates, and very dry ſoils in the coldeſt; but a certain mixture of wet and dry forms ice and ſnow, the quantity of which determines the degree and duration of cold. Now, whoever has travelled ever ſo little in Canada muſt be ſenſible that this mixture obtains there in a very remarkable manner. There is undoubtedly no country in the world which abounds more with water, and there are few which have a greater mixture of ſtones and ſand. With all this it rains very ſeldom, and the air is extremely pure and wholeſome, an evident proof of the natural dryneſs of the ſoil. In effect, Father Bretani tells us, that during the ſixteen years he was employed as miſſionary in the country of the Hurons, there were there at the ſame time to the number of ſixty French, ſeveral of whom were of a very delicate complexion, all of them had been very ill fed, and had beſides endured hardſhips beyond what could be imagined, and yet that not one of that number had died.

It is true, this prodigious number of rivers and lakes, which take up as much ſpace in new France as one half the continent of Europe, ought to furniſh the air with a continual ſupply of freſh vapours, but beſides that the greateſt part of theſe waters are extremely clear, and upon a ſandy bottom, their great and continual agitation by blunting the efficacy of the ſun's rays, prevents vapours from being exhaled in great quantities, or ſoon cauſes them to fall again in miſts. For the winds raiſe as frequent and violent tempeſts upon theſe freſh-water ſeas as upon the ocean, which is likewiſe the true reaſon why it rains ſo ſeldom at ſea.

The ſecond cauſe of the extreme cold of Canada, according to father Bretani, is the neighbourhood of the North Sea, covered with enormous iſlands of ice for more than eight months of the year, there, Madam, you may call to mind what I told you in my ſecond letter, of the cold we felt even in the dog-days, from the neighbourhood of one of theſe iſlands of ice, or rather from the wind which blew upon us from that ſide on which it lay, and which ceaſed that moment it fell to the leeward of us. It is, beſides, certain that it never ſnows here but with a north-eaſt wind, which blows from that quarter in which the northern ice lyes; and tho' the cold is not ſo very piercing when the ſnow falls, yet it cannot be doubted that it greatly contributes to render the weſt and north-weſt winds ſo extremely ſharp, which before they reach us blow over immenſe countries, and a great chain of mountains entirely covered with it.

Laſtly, if we believe the Italian miſſionary, the height of the land is not the leaſt cauſe of the ſubtility of the air of this country, and conſequently of the ſeverity of its cold. Father Bretani endeavours to prove this height of the land from the depth of the ſea, which encreaſes according to him in proportion as you approach Canada, and from the number and height of the falls ſo frequent in the rivers. But in my opinion the depth of the ſea abſolutely proves nothing, and the falls of St. Lawrence and ſome other rivers in New France, no more than the cataracts of the Nile. Moreover, it is not obſerved that, from Montreal where the falls commence to the ſea, the river St. Lawrence is much more rapid than ſome of our rivers in Europe. I am therefore of opinion that we muſt confine our reaſoning to the ices of the north; and that

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even notwithſtanding this, if Canada were as well cleared and as populous as France, the winters would become much ſhorter and leſs ſevere. They would not however be always ſo mild as in France, on account of the ſerenity and pureneſs of the air; for it is certain that in the winter ſeaſon every thing elſe being equal, the froſt is always ſharper when the ſky is clear, and the ſun has rarified the air.

After winter is paſt, fiſhing and hunting ſupply thoſe who will take the trouble with proviſions in abundance; beſides the fiſh and the game which I have already ſpoken of, the river St. Lawrence and the foreſts furniſh the inhabitants with two articles, which are a great reſource to them. From Quebec as high as Trois Rivieres, a prodigious quantity of large eels are caught in the river, which eels come down from Lake Ontario, where they are bred in the marſhes on the north ſide of the Lake, and meeting, as I have already obſerved, with the white porpoiſes which give them chace, the greateſt part endeavour to return back, which is the reaſon of their being taken in ſuch numbers. This fiſhery is carried on in the following manner.

Thro' that whole extent of ground, which is covered at high water, but left dry during the ebb, boxes are ſet at convenient diſtances, which are ſupported by a palliſade of oſier hurdles, contrived in ſuch a manner that no free paſſage is left for the eels. Large caſting nets of the ſame materials and ſtructure are fixed by the narroweſt end in theſe boxes, while the other extremity, which is very wide, is backed againſt the hurdles, upon which green branches are placed at intervals. When all is covered by the tide, the eels which love to be near the banks, and are attracted by the verdure, gather

in great numbers along the palliſade, go in to the nets, which lead them into the priſons prepared for them, ſo that all the boxes are often filled in the ſpace of one tide.

Theſe eels are larger than ours, and yield a great deal of oil. I have already obſerved that with whatever ſauce they are dreſſed, they ſtill retain a diſagreeable reliſh, to which people cannot eaſily accuſtom themſelves. This perhaps is the fault of our cooks. All their bones terminate in a point ſomewhat crooked, which I do not remember to have ſeen in thoſe of France. The beſt method of preparing this fiſh, is to hang them up in a chimney, and ſuffer them to fry ſlowly in their ſkins, which come off of themſelves, and all the oil runs out. As great quantities of them are taken during the time this fiſhery laſts, they are ſalted and barreled up like herrings.

The other article I mentioned, is a ſort of wood-pigeon, which uſed to come hither in the months of May and June, as was ſaid, in ſuch numbers as to darken the air, but the caſe is different at preſent. Nevertheleſs, a very great number ſtill come to reſt themſelves upon the trees, even in the neighbourhood of the towns. They are commonly called turtles, and differ from the wood and other pigeons in Europe, ſufficiently to conſtitute a fourth ſpecies. They are ſmaller than our largeſt pigeons, and have the ſame eyes and changing ſhadows upon their necks. Their plumage is a dark brown, excepting their wings, in which there are ſome feathers of a very fine blue.

Theſe birds may be ſaid to ſeek only an opportunity of being killed, for if there is a naked branch upon

upon a tree, on that they chuſe to perch, and ſit in ſuch a manner, that the moſt inexperienced gunner can hardly fail of bringing down at leaſt half a dozen at a ſingle ſhot. Means have likewiſe been found of catching many of them alive; they are fed till the firſt ſetting in of the froſts, then killed, and thrown into the ſtore-room, where they are preſerved all the winter.

Thus it appears, Madam, that every one here is poſſeſſed of the neceſſaries of life; but there is little paid to the King; the inhabitant is not acquainted with taxes; bread is cheap; fiſh and fleſh are not dear; but wine, ſtuffs, and all French commodities are very expenſive. Gentlemen, and thoſe officers who have nothing but their pay, and are beſides encumbered with families, have the greateſt reaſon to complaim. The women have a great deal of ſpirit and good nature, are extremely agreeable, and excellent breeders; and theſe good qualities are for the moſt part all the fortune they bring their huſbands; but God has bleſſed the marriages in this country in the ſame manner he formerly bleſſed thoſe of the Patriarchs. In order to ſupport ſuch numerous families, they ought likewiſe to lead the lives of Patriarchs, but the time for this is paſt. There are a greater number of nobleſſe in New France than in all the other colonies put together.

The king maintains here eight and twenty companies of marines, and three etats majors. Many families have been ennobled here, and there ſtill remain ſeveral officers of the regiment of Corignan-Salieres, who have peopled this country with gentlemen who are not in extraordinary good circumſtances, and would be ſtill leſs ſo, were not commerce

allowed them, and the right of hunting and fiſhing, which is common to every one.

After all, it is a little their own fault if they are ever expoſed to want; the land is good almoſt every where, and agriculture does not in the leaſt derogate from their quality. How many gentlemen throughout all our provinces would envy the lot of the ſimple inhabitants of Canada, did they but know it? And can thoſe who languiſh here in a ſhameful indigence, be excuſed for refuſing to embrace a profeſſion, which the corruption of manners and the moſt ſalutary maxims has alone degraded from its ancient dignity? There is not in the world a more wholeſome climate than this; no particular diſtemper is epidemical here, the fields and woods are full of ſimples of a wonderful efficacy, and the trees diſtill balms of an excellent quality. Theſe advantages ought at leaſt to engage thoſe whoſe birth providence has caſt in this country to remain in it; but inconſtancy, averſion to a regular and aſſiduous labour, and a ſpirit of independence, have ever carried a great many young people out of it, and prevented the colony from being peopled.

Theſe, Madam, are the defects with which the French Canadians are, with the greateſt juſtice, reproached. The ſame may likewiſe be ſaid of the Indians. One would imagine that the air they breathe in this immenſe continent contributes to it; but the example and frequent intercourſe with its natural inhabitants are more than ſufficient to conſtitute this character. Our Creoles are likewiſe accuſed of great avidity in amaſſing, and indeed they do things with this view, which could hardly be believed if they were not ſeen. The journeys they undertake; the fatigues they undergo; the dangers to which

which they expoſe themſelves, and the efforts they make, ſurpaſs all imagination. There are however few leſs intereſted, who diſſipate with greater facility what has coſt them ſo much pains to acquire, or who teſtify leſs regret at having loſt it. Thus there is ſome room to imagine that they commonly undertake ſuch painful and dangerous journeys out of a taſte they have contracted for them. They love to breathe a free air, they are early accuſtomed to a wandering life; it has charms for them, which make them forget paſt dangers and fatigues, and they place their glory in encountering them often. They have a great deal of wit, eſpecially the fair ſex, in whom it is brilliant and eaſy; they are, beſides, conſtant and reſolute, fertile in reſources, courageous, and capable of managing the greateſt affairs. You, Madam, are acquainted with more than one of this character, and have often declared your ſurpriſe at it to me. I can aſſure you ſuch are frequent in this country, and are to be found in all ranks and conditions of life.

I know not whether I ought to reckon amongſt the defects of our Canadians the good opinion they entertain of themſelves. It is at leaſt certain that it inſpires them with a confidence, which leads them to undertake and execute what would appear impoſſible to many others. It muſt however be confeſſed they have excellent qualities. There is not a province in the kingdom where the people have a finer complexion, a more advantageous ſtature, or a body better proportioned. The ſtrength of their conſtitution is not always anſwerable, and if the Canadians live to any age, they ſoon look old and decrepid. This is not entirely their own fault, it is likewiſe that of their parents, who are not ſufficiently watchful over their children to prevent their ruining

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their health at a time of life, when if it ſuffers it is ſeldom or never recovered. Their agility and addreſs are unequalled; the moſt expert Indians themſelves are not better markſmen, or manage their canoes in the moſt dangerous *rapids* with greater ſkill.

Many are of opinion that they are unfit for the ſciences, which require any great degree of application, and a continued ſtudy. I am not able to ſay whether this prejudice is well founded, for as yet we have ſeen no Canadian who has endeavoured to remove it, which is perhaps owing to the diſſipation in which they are brought up. But nobody can deny them an excellent genius for mechanics; they have hardly any occaſion for the aſſiſtance of a maſter in order to excel in this ſcience; and ſome are every day to be met with who have ſucceeded in all trades, without ever having ſerved an apprenticeſhip.

Some people tax them with ingratitude, nevertheleſs they ſeem to me to have a pretty good diſpoſition; but their natural inconſtancy often prevents their attending to the duties required by gratitude. It is alledged they make bad ſervants, which is owing to their great haughtineſs of ſpirit, and to their loving liberty too much to ſubject themſelves willingly to ſervitude. They are however good maſters, which is the reverſe of what is ſaid of thoſe from whom the greateſt part of them are deſcended. They would have been perfect in character, if to their own virtues they had added thoſe of their anceſtors. Their inconſtancy in friendſhip has ſometimes been complained of; but this complaint can hardly be general, and in thoſe who have given occaſion for it, it proceeds from their not being accuſtomed to conſtraint, even in their own affairs. If

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they are not eaſily diſciplin'd, this likewiſe proceeds from the ſame principle, or from their having a diſcipline peculiar to themſelves, which they believe is better adapted for carrying on war againſt the Indians, in which they are not entirely to blame. Moreover, they appear to me to be unable to govern a certain impetuoſity, which renders them fitter for ſudden ſurpriſes or haſty expeditions, than the regular and continued operations of a campaign. It has likewiſe been obſerved, that amongſt a great number of brave men who diſtinguiſhed themſelves in the laſt wars, there were very few found capable of bearing a ſuperior. This is perhaps owing to their not having ſufficiently learned to obey. It is however true, that when they are well conducted, there is nothing which they will not accompliſh, whether by ſea or land, but in order to this they muſt entertain a great opinion of their commander. The late M. d' Iberville, who had all the good qualities of his countrymen without any of their defects, could have led them to the end of the world.

There is one thing with reſpect to which they are not eaſily to be excuſed, and that is the little natural affection moſt of them ſhew to their parents, who for their part diſplay a tenderneſs for them, which is not extremely well managed. The Indians fall into the ſame defect, and it produces amongſt them the ſame conſequences. But what above all things ought to make the Canadians be held in much eſteem, is the great fund they have of piety and religion, and that nothing is wanting to their education upon this article. It is likewiſe true, that when they are out of their own country they hardly retain any of their defects. As with all this they are extremely brave and active, they might be of great ſervice in war, in the marine and in the arts;

and

and I am opinion that it would redound greatly to the advantage of the ſtate, were they to be much more numerous than they are at preſent. Men conſtitute the principal riches of the Sovereign, and Canada, ſhould it be of no other uſe to France, would ſtill be, were it well peopled, one of the moſt important of all our colonies.

*I am*, &c.

LETTER

# LETTER XI.

*Of the* Iroquoiſe *village of the Fall of St.* Lewis. *Of the different nations inhabiting* Canada.

*Fall of St. Lewis, May* 1, 1721.

*Madam,*

I Came hither to ſpend a part of the Eaſter holidays; this is a time of devotion, and in this village every thing inſpires one with ſentiments of piety. All the exerciſes of religion are carried on in a very edifying manner, and we ſtill feel the impreſſion which the fervor of the firſt inhabitants has left behind it; for it is certain, that this for a long time was the only place in Canada, where you could perceive the great examples of thoſe heroick virtues with which God has been uſed to enrich his churches when in their infancy; and the manner in which it has been erected is ſomething very extraordinary.

The miſſionaries after having for a long time watered the Iroquoiſe cantons with the ſweat of their brows, and ſome of them even with their blood, were at laſt ſenſible that it was impracticable to eſtabliſh the chriſtian religion amongſt them upon a ſolid foundation; but they ſtill had hopes of reducing a

conſiderable number of theſe Indians under the yoke of the faith. They perceived that God had an elect few among theſe barbarians as in every nation; but they were perſuaded, that *to make their calling and election ſure*, they muſt ſeparate from their brethren; and therefore came to a reſolution to ſettle all thoſe who were diſpoſed to embrace Chriſtianity in a colony by themſelves. They made known their deſign to the governor-general and intendant, who carrying their views ſtill farther, highly approved it, being ſenſible that this ſettlement would be greatly advantageous to New France, as it has indeed been, as well as another ſimilar to it, which has ſince been ſet on foot in the iſland of Montreal, under the name of *la Montagne*, of which the ſuperiors of the ſeminary of St. Sulpicius have always had the direction.

To return to this which has ſerved as a model for the other, one of the Iroquois miſſionaries communicated his deſign to ſome *Aquiers*; they reliſhed his propoſal, and this ſettlement was formed chiefly out of that canton, which had at all times been the moſt averſe to the miniſters of the goſpel, and had even treated them the moſt cruelly. Thus to the great aſtoniſhment of the French and Indians, thoſe formidable enemies to God and our nation were touched with that victorious grace, which takes delight in triumphing over the hardeſt and moſt rebellious hearts, abandoning every thing that was deareſt to them, that they might have no impediment in ſerving the Lord with all liberty. A ſacrifice ſtill more glorious for Indians, than for any other nation, becauſe there are none ſo much attached as they are to their families and their native country.

Their

Their numbers encreaſed greatly in a ſhort time, and this progreſs was, in a great meaſure, owing to the zeal of the firſt converts who compoſed this choſen flock. In the very height of a war, and even with the hazard of their lives they have travelled over all the cantons, in order to make proſelites, and when they have fallen into the hands of their enemies, who were often their neareſt relations, reckoned themſelves happy when dying in the midſt of the moſt frightful torments, as having expoſed themſelves to them, ſolely for the glory of God and the ſalvation of their brethren. Such were the ſentiments even of the murtherers of the miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt, and perhaps this oracle of St. Paul, Ep. Rom. c. 20. *Ubi autem abundavit delictum, ſuperabundavit Gratia*, was never ſo literally accompliſhed as now. It was moſt commonly left to their choice, either to renounce Jeſus Chriſt and return to their canton, or to ſuffer the moſt cruel death, and there was not an example of one who accepted life upon that condition. Some have even periſhed worn out with miſeries in the priſons of New-York, when they could have had their liberty on changing their belief, or engaging not to live among the French, which they imagined they could not do without running the riſque of loſing their faith.

Thoſe converts, who on ſuch occaſions diſplayed ſo much fidelity and greatneſs of ſoul, muſt undoubtedly have been prepared for it by the pureſt virtue; we cannot in reality call in queſtion certain facts, which have been notorious over the whole colony, and which render thoſe very credible for which we have only the evidence of the Indians themſelves and their paſtors. M. de St. Valier, who is head of this church to this day, wrote as follows in the year

year 1688. "The lives of all the Chriſtians of this miſſion are very extraordinary, and the whole village would be taken for a monaſtery. As they have quitted the allurements of their native country, entirely to make ſure of their ſalvation, they are all led to the practice of the moſt perfect reſignation, and they preſerve amongſt them ſuch excellent rules for their ſanctification that nothing can be added to them."

This village was at firſt placed in the meadow *de la Madeleine*, about a league lower than the Fall of St. Lewis on the ſouth-ſide. But the ſoil being found improper for the culture of maïz, it was tranſported to a place oppoſite to the Fall itſelf, from whence it has taken the name it ſtill bears, though it has been carried from thence a few years ago a league higher up. I have already obſerved, that its ſituation is charming, that the church, and the houſe of the miſſionaries, are two of the fineſt edifices in this country, which makes me imagine, that they have taken ſuch good meaſures as not to be obliged to make a new tranſmigration.

On my arrival here, I had laid my account with departing immediately after the feſtivals; but nothing is more ſubject to diſappointments of all kinds than this manner of travelling. I am, therefore, ſtill uncertain as to the day of my departure; and as in ſuch voyages as mine, advantage is to be taken of every occurrence, I ſhall now make the beſt uſe I can of this preſent delay. I have ſpent my time in the company of ſome old miſſionaries, who have lived a long time among the Indians, and I ſhall now, Madam, give you an account of what I have heard from them concerning the different nations inhabiting this immenſe continent.

The

The firſt land of America which is diſcovered on a voyage from France to Canada is Newfoundland, one of the largeſt iſlands we are acquainted with. It has never yet been fully determined, whether its inhabitants are natives of the country, and its barrenneſs, were it really as great as it is ſuppoſed to be, would be no ſufficient proof that they are not; for hunting and fiſhing afford ſufficient ſubſiſtence for Indians. What is certain is, that none but Eſkimaux have ever been ſeen upon it, who are not originally of this iſland. Their real native country is the land of *Laborador*, or *Labrador*, it is there, at leaſt, they paſs the greateſt part of the year; for, in my opinion, it would be profaning the grateful appellation of a native country, to apply it to wandering barbarians who have no affection for any country, and who being ſcarce able to people two or three villages, yet occupy an immenſe extent of land. In effect, beſides the coaſts of Newfoundland, which the Eſkimaux wander over in the ſummer-time, there are none but that people to be ſeen throughout all that vaſt continent lying betwixt the river St. Lawrence, Canada, and the North ſea. Some of them have been even found at a great diſtance from hence up the river Bourbon, which runs from the weſtward, and falls into Hudſon's-Bay.

The origin of their name is not certain, but it is probably derived from the Abenaquiſe word *Eſquimantris*, which ſignifies an eater of raw fleſh. The Eſquimaux are in fact the only ſavages we know of who eat raw fleſh, though they are likewiſe in uſe to broil or dry it in the ſun. It is likewiſe certain, that there is no nation known in America, which anſwers better to the firſt idea Europeans are apt to conceive of ſavages. They are almoſt the only nation amongſt whom the men have beards, which

grow up to their eyes, and are ſo thick, that it is with difficulty the features of their faces are to be diſtinguiſhed. They have likewiſe ſomething very frightful in their air and mien, ſmall fiery eyes, large and very ugly teeth, hair commonly black, ſometimes fair, always very much in diſorder, and their whole external appearance extremely brutiſh. Their manners and character do not bely the deformity of their phiſiognomy; they are fierce, ſavage, ſuſpicious, turbulent, and have a conſtant propenſity to do miſchief to ſtrangers, who ought to be perpetually on their guard againſt them. As to the qualities of their mind we have had ſo little intercourſe with this nation that we do not as yet know their real temper; but they have always had a ſufficient bent towards miſchief.

They have been frequently known to go in the night-time, and cut the cables of ſhips at anchor, in order to make them drive on ſhore, and then plunder the wrecks; they are not afraid to attack them even in open day on diſcovering their crews to be weak. It has never been poſſible to tame them, and it is not ſafe to hold any diſcourſe with them but at the end of a long pole. They not only refuſe to come near the Europeans, but they will not ſo much as eat any thing they preſent to them; and in all things take ſo many precautions on their ſide, which mark an extreme diſtruſt, that they muſt mutually inſpire the ſame with reſpect to every thing which comes from them. They are of an advantageous ſtature, and are tolerably well made. Their ſkin is as white as ours, which proceeds undoubtedly from their never going naked even in the warmeſt weather.

Their

Their beards, their fair hair, the whiteneſs of their ſkin, and the little reſemblance and intercourſe they have with their neareſt neighbours leave no room to doubt of their having a different original from the reſt of the Americans; but the opinion of their being deſcended from the Baſques ſeems to me to have little foundation, if it is true, as I am informed it is, that the languages of the two nations have no affinity with one another. This alliance at any rate can be of no honour to any nation; for if there is not on the ſurface of the earth a region leſs fit to be inhabited than Newfoundland and Labrador, ſo there is not, perhaps, a people which deſerves better to be confined to it than the Eſkimaux. For my part, I am of opinion, that they are originally from Greenland.

Theſe ſavages are covered in ſuch a manner that only a part of their faces and the ends of their hands are to be ſeen. Over a ſort of a ſhirt made of bladders, or the inteſtines of fiſh cut into fillets, and neatly enough ſewed together, they throw a kind of a ſurtout made of bear-ſkin, or of the ſkin of ſome other wild beaſt, nay, ſometimes of the ſkins of birds, whilſt their head is covered with a cowl of the ſame ſtuff, with the ſhirt fixed to it; on the top of which is a tuft of hair, which hangs down and ſhades their forehead. The ſhirt falls no lower than their loins, the ſurtout hangs down behind to their thighs, and terminates before in a point ſomewhat lower than their girdle; but in the women it deſcends on both ſides as far as the mid-leg, where it is fixed by a girdle, at which hang little bones. The men wear breeches made of ſkins, with the hairy ſide inwards, and faced on the outſide with ermine, and ſuch like furs. They likewiſe wear on their feet pumps of ſkins, the

hairy ſide of which is alſo inwards; and above them furred boots of the ſame, and over theſe a ſecond pair of pumps, then another pair of boots over that. It is affirmed they are ſometimes ſhod in this manner three or four times over, which, however, does not prevent theſe Indians from being extremely active. Their arrows, the only weapons they uſe, are pointed with the teeth of the ſea-cow, to which they likewiſe add iron when they can get it. In the ſummer they live in the open air, night and day, but in the winter under ground, in a ſort of caverns, where they lie pell-mell one above another.

We are but little acquainted with the other nations living beyond Hudſon's-bay, and in its neighbourhood. In the ſouthern parts of this bay, the trade is carried on with the Mataſſins, the Monſonis, the Chriſtinaux, and Aſſiniboils; theſe laſt muſt come from a great diſtance as they inhabit the borders of a lake to the north or north-weſt of the Sioux, and likewiſe ſpeak a dialect of their language. The three others ſpeak the Algonquin tongue. The Chriſtinaux or Killiſtinons, come from the northward of Lake Superior. The Indians in the neighbourhood of the river Bourbon *, and the river St. Thereſa, have no affinity in their language either with the one or the other. Perhaps, they may be better underſtood amongſt the Eſkimaux, who have been ſeen, as is ſaid, a great way above the mouth of this river. It has been obſerved that

* It is ſaid that a hundred leagues from the mouth of this river, it is unnavigable for fifty more, but that a paſſage is found by means of rivers and lakes which fall into it, and that afterwards it runs through the middle of a very fine country, which continues as far as the Lake of the Aſſiniboils, from whence it takes its riſe.

they are extremely ſuperſtitious, and uſe ſome kind of ſacrifices. Thoſe who have had the greateſt intercourſe with them, aſſure us, that in common with the Indians of Canada, they have a notion of a good and of an evil genius, that the Sun is their great divinity, and that when they deliberate upon any affair of importance, they make him an offering of ſmoke which is done in the following manner. At break of day they aſſemble in the cabbin of one of their chiefs, who, after having lighted his pipe, preſents it three times to the riſing ſun, and then turning it with both his hands from the eaſt to the weſt, he ſupplicates this luminary to be propitious to his people. This being done, all thoſe who compoſe the aſſembly, ſmoke in the ſame pipe. All theſe Indians, though of four or five different nations are known in the French accounts under the general name of the *Savanois*, becauſe the country they inhabit is low, marſhy, and ill-wooded, and in Canada, all thoſe wet lands, which are good for nothing are called Savannahs.

Coaſting along the north-ſhore of the Bay, you meet with two rivers, the firſt of which is called *Daniſh-River*, and the ſecond the river of the *Sea-Wolf*; on the banks of both theſe rivers there are Indians, who, I know not why, have got the name, or rather nickname of *Plats côtez de Chiens*, or Flat-ſided Dogs, and are often at war with the Savanois; but neither of them treat their priſoners with that barbarity which is uſual among the Canadians, being contented with keeping them in ſlavery. Want ſometimes reduces the Savanois to ſtrange extremities; and whether it be idleneſs on their part, or that their lands are abſolutely good for nothing, they find themſelves entirely deſtitute of proviſions when their hunting and fiſhing prove

unſucceſsful, and then they are ſaid to make no difficulty of eating one another. The moſt daſtardly are the firſt ſacrifices; it is further pretended, that when a man arrives at ſuch an age that he can only be a burthen and expence to his family, he himſelf paſſes a cord round his own neck, the extremities of which he preſents to the child who is deareſt to him, who ſtrangles him as expeditiouſly as he can, believing that in ſo doing, he performs a good action, not only by putting an end to the ſufferings of his father, but likewiſe by advancing his happineſs; for theſe Indians imagine, that a man who dies old is born again in the other world at the age of a child at the breaſt; and that, on the contrary, thoſe who finiſh their courſe ſoon, become old when they arrive at the country of ſouls.

The young women among theſe people never marry but with the advice of their parents, and the ſon-in law is obliged to ſtay with his father-in-law, and be ſubſervient to him in every thing, till he has children himſelf. The young men leave their father's houſes very early. Theſe Indians burn their dead bodies, and wrap the aſhes in the bark of a tree, which they lay into the ground. Afterwards they erect upon the grave a ſort of monument with poſts, to which they fix tobacco, in order that the deceaſed may have materials for ſmoaking in the other world. If he was a hunter, his bow and arrows are ſuſpended there likewiſe. The mothers lament their children for twenty days, and preſents are made to the fathers, who make an acknowledgment for them by a feaſt. War is held in leſs eſtimation amongſt them than hunting; but before any perſon can be eſteemed a good hunter, he muſt faſt for three days running, without taſting any thing whatever, and all that time he muſt have his face

face painted with black. The feaſt being ended, the candidate offers up a ſacrifice to the great ſpirit, conſiſting of a morſel of each of the animals he has been uſed to hunt, being commonly the tongue and muzzle, which, except on ſuch occaſions, are always the portion of the hunter himſelf. His parents and relations would rather die of hunger than touch it, and he is allowed to regale his friends and ſtrangers only in this manner.

It is further aſſerted, that theſe Indians are perfectly diſintereſted, that they poſſeſs a fidelity proof againſt all temptation, that they cannot endure a lie, and hold deceit in abhorrence. This, Madam, is what I have been able to learn with reſpect to theſe northern people, with whom we have never maintained any regular commerce, and have only ſeen them in a tranſient manner. We ſhall now proceed to thoſe with whom we are better acquainted, who may be divided into three claſſes diſtinguiſhed by their languages and their peculiar geniuſes.

In this vaſt extent of country, properly called New-France, and bounded on the north by Hudſon's-Bay, which was diſmembered from it by the treaty of Utrecht, on the eaſt by the ſea, by the Engliſh colonies on the ſouth, by Louiſiana on the ſouth-eaſt, and by the Spaniſh poſſeſſions on the weſt; I ſay, in this vaſt extent of country there are but three mother-tongues, from which all the reſt are derived; theſe are, the Sioux, Algonquin, and Huron languages; we are but little acquainted with the people who ſpeak the firſt, and nobody knows how far they extend. We have hitherto had no trade with any but the Sioux and Aſſiniboils, and

even this trade has not been very regularly carried on.

Our miſſionaries have endeavoured to make a ſettlement amongſt the firſt, and I knew one who regretted very much his not being able to ſucceed, or rather his not ſtaying longer amongſt them, as they ſeemed to be extremely docile. There is, perhaps, no people to the north-weſt of the Miſſiſſippi, of of whom we can receive better and more authentic information than this, by reaſon that they can carry on a trade with all the other nations on this immenſe continent. They dwell commonly in meadows under large tents made of ſkins, which are very well wrought, and live on wild oats, which grow in great plenty in their meadows and rivers, and by hunting, eſpecially the buffalo, which are covered with wool, and are found by thouſands in their meadows. They have no fixed abode, but travel in great companies like the Tartars, never ſtopping in any place longer than they are detained by the chace.

Our geographers divide this people into the *wandering Sioux*, and the *Sioux of the Meadows*, into the *Sioux of the Eaſt*, and the *Sioux of the Weſt*. This diviſion does not ſeem to me to be well founded. All the Sioux live in the ſame manner, whence it happens, that a village which the year before was on the eaſtern bank of the Miſſiſſippi, ſhall be this year on the weſtern bank, and that thoſe who have lived for ſome time on the banks of the river St. Peter, ſhall, perhaps, be at preſent in ſome meadow a great diſtance from it. The name Sioux, which we have given to theſe Indians, is entirely of our own invention, or rather the two laſt ſyllables of of the word *Nadoueſſioux*, a name by which ſeveral nations diſtinguiſh them. Others call them *Nadoueſſis*.

*doueſſis.* This nation is the moſt populous we know in Canada. They were ſufficiently pacific, and but little addicted to war, before the Hurons and Outawais when they fled from the fury of the Iroquois, took refuge in their country. They laughed at them for their ſimplicity, and made them warlike at their own expence. The Sioux have a plurality of wives, and ſeverely puniſh ſuch as are wanting in conjugal fidelity. They cut off the tip of their noſes, and make a circle in the ſkin on the top of their heads, and afterwards tear it off. I have ſeen ſome perſons, who were perſuaded theſe people ſpoke with the Chineſe accent; it would be no difficult matter to determine this fact, or if their language has any affinity with that of China.

Thoſe perſons who have had intercourſe with the Aſſiniboils, tell us, that they are tall, well-made, robuſt, active, and inured to cold, and all manner of fatigue; that they are pricked over all the body, and marked with the figures of ſerpents and other animals; and that they are in uſe to undertake very long journeys. There is nothing in all this which diſtinguiſhes them from the other nations of this continent which we are acquainted with; but what particularly characterizes them, is, their being extremely phlegmatick, at leaſt they appear ſo in reſpect of the Chriſtinaux who trade with them, and who are indeed of an extraordinary vivacity, continually dancing and ſinging, and ſpeaking with precipitation and a volubility of tongue, which is not obſerved in any other Indian nation.

The true country of the Aſſiniboils, is in the neighbourhood of a lake which bears their name, with which we are but little acquainted. A Frenchman, whom I ſaw at Montreal, aſſured me he had been

been there, but had ſeen it only in a tranſient manner, as one ſees the ſea in a harbour. It is the common opinion, that this lake is ſix hundred leagues in circumference; that there is no paſſage to it but through roads almoſt impracticable; that all its banks are delightful; that the climate is very temperate, though it lies to the north-weſt of Lake Superior, where it is extremely cold, and that it contains ſo great a number of iſlands, that it is called in that country, the *Lake of Iſlands*; ſome Indians call it *Michinipi*, which ſignifies the *Great Water*; and it ſeems in effect to be the reſervoir or ſource of the greateſt rivers, and all the great lakes of North-America; for on ſeveral accounts, all the following rivers are ſaid to have their riſe from it; the river Bourbon, which runs into Hudſon's-Bay; the river St. Laurence, which carries its waters to the ocean; the Miſſiſſippi, which falls into the gulph of Mexico; the Miſſouri, which mixes with this laſt, and till their junction is in nothing inferior to it; and a fifth, which runs as they ſay, weſtward, and conſequently diſcharges its waters into the South-Sea. It is a great pity that this lake was not known to thoſe learned men who have ſought for the terreſtrial paradiſe all over the world; it might have been placed here with at leaſt as great propriety as in Scandinavia. I do not, however, warrant all theſe facts, which are ſupported only by the accounts of travellers, and much leſs what the Indians have related, that in the neighbourhood of the Lake of the Aſſiniboils, there are men reſembling the Europeans, who are ſettled in a country where gold and ſilver are ſo common, that they are employed in the meaneſt uſes. Father Marquette, who diſcovered the Miſſiſſippi in 1673, ſays in his relation, that the Indians not only talked to him of the river which runs from this lake weſtward, but likewiſe

added

added, that they had ſeen large ſhips at its mouth. It appears beſides, that the Aſſiniboils are the ſame people who in the old maps are marked under the name of *Poualaks*, and of whom ſome accounts ſay, that their country is contiguous to that of the Chriſtinaux or Killiſtinons.

The Algonquin and Huron languages ſhare betwixt them almoſt all the Indian nations of Canada, with whom we have any commerce. A perſon well acquainted with both might travel over above fifteen hundred leagues of a country without an interpreter, and make himſelf underſtood by above a hundred different nations, who have each of them their peculiar language. The Algonquin particularly has a prodigious extent. It begins at Acadia and the gulph of St. Laurence, and makes a circuit of twelve hundred leagues, turning from the ſouth eaſt by the north to the ſouth-weſt. It is even ſaid, that the Makingans or Wolves, and the greateſt part of the Indians of New-England and Virginia ſpeak dialects of this language.

The *Abenaquis*, or *Conibas* bordering upon New-England, have, for their neareſt neighbours the *Etechemins*, or *Malécites* in the country about the river Pentagoët, and further to the eaſt are the *Micmaks* or *Souriquois*, whoſe country is properly Accadia, all along the coaſt of the gulph of St. Laurence as far as Gaſpey, whence a certain author has called them *Gaſpeſians*, as well as the neighbouring iſlands. Going up the river St. Laurence, you do not meet with any Indian nations at preſent till you come to Saguenay. Yet when Canada was diſcovered and ſome years afterwards, ſeveral Indian nations were found in that territory, which ſpread themſelves over the iſland of Anticoſti, towards the moun-

mountains of Notre Dame, and along the northern ſide of the river. Thoſe moſt frequently mentioned in ancient accounts are the *Berſiamites*, the *Papinachois*, and the *Montagnez*, who were likewiſe called, eſpecially the latter, the *inferior Algonquins*, on account of their dwelling on the lower part of the river with reſpect to Quebec; but the greateſt part of the reſt are reduced to a few families which you meet with, ſometimes in one place ſometimes in another.

There were ſome nations which uſed to come down to the colony from the northern parts, ſometimes by the Saguenay, but oftener by *Trois Rivieres*, of whom we have heard no mention made for ſome time paſt. Such were amongſt others the *Attikamegues*, who came from a great diſtance, and were ſurrounded by ſeveral other nations who extended themſelves to the country about Lake *St. John*, and as far as the lakes of the *Miſtaſirus* and *Nemiſcan*. Theſe are almoſt all put to the ſword by the Iroquois, or deſtroyed by diſtempers, a conſequence of the miſery the fear of theſe barbarians has reduced them to; which is much to be regretted, as they were a people without vice, of a mild temper, and might have been eaſily gained over to Jeſus Chriſt, and to the intereſt of the French nation. Between Quebec and Montreal, and towards Trois Rivieres we ſtill find a few Algonquins who trade with the French, but do not form a village. In the time of the firſt diſcoveries this nation poſſeſſed all the northern ſide of the river, from Quebec, where M. Champlain found them ſettled and made an alliance with them, as far as the lake of St. Peter.

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From the iſland of Montreal, always taking a north courſe, you find a few villages of the *Nipiſſings*, the *Temiſcamings*, the *Têtes de Boule*, or *Roundheads*, the *Amikouês*, and *Outaways*. The firſt, who were the true Algonquins, and have alone preſerved the Algonquin language in its purity, have given their name to a ſmall lake lying between Lake Huron, and the river of the Outaways. The Temiſcamings poſſeſs the banks of another ſmall lake, which likewiſe bears their name, and ſeems to be the true ſource of the river of the Outaways. The Roundheads are at no great diſtance, who have their name from the roundneſs of their heads; they think there is a great beauty in this figure, and it is very probable the mothers give it to their children, while in their cradles. The Amikouês, otherwiſe called the *nation of the Beaver*, are reduced almoſt to nothing; the few remaining of them are found in the iſland *Manitoualin* in the northern part of Lake Huron. The Outaways who were formerly very numerous inhabited the banks of that great river which bears their name, and of which they pretended to be the lords. I know not but of three villages of them, very indifferently peopled, of which I ſhall ſpeak in the ſequel.

Between Lake Huron and Lake Superior, even in the ſtreight itſelf, by which the ſecond diſcharges its waters into the firſt, there is a fall called by us *Sault St. Marie*, or the Fall of St. Mary. The country round about it was formerly peopled by Indians, who it is ſaid came from the ſouthern banks of Lake Superior, and were called *Saulteurs*, that is to ſay, *Inhabitants of the Fall*. This name was probably given them to ſave the labour of pronouncing that which they gave themſelves, which could not poſſibly be done without taking breath

two

two or three times *. There is no nation, at leaſt that I know of, ſettled on the banks of Lake Superior; but in the poſts which we poſſeſs there a trade is carried on with the Chriſtinaux, who come from the north-eaſt, and ſpeak the Algonquin language, and with the Aſſiniboils, who come from the north-weſt.

Lake *Michigan*, which is almoſt parallel to Lake Huron, into which it diſcharges itſelf, and is ſeparated from it by a peninſula, about a hundred leagues in length, growing continually narrower towards the north, has but few inhabitants on its banks; I do not even know if ever any nation was fixed there, and it is without foundation, that it has been called in ſome maps the lake of the Illinois. Going up the *River St. Joſeph*, the waters of which it receives, you find two villages of different nations, who have come from ſome other place not long ſince. On the weſt ſide of this lake is a large bay, extending eight and twenty leagues to the ſouth, and called the *Baye des Puans*, or ſimply the *Bay*. Its entrance is very large, and interſperſed with iſlands, ſome of which are from fifteen to twenty leagues in circumference. They were formerly inhabited by the *Poutewatamies*, whoſe name they bear, excepting ſome few on the right hand, where there are ſtill ſome Indians called *Noquets*. The Poutewatamies poſſeſs at preſent one of the ſmalleſt of theſe iſlands, and have beſides two other villages, one at the river St. Joſeph, and the other at the Narrows. At the bottom of this bay are the *Sakis* and *Otchagras*, which laſt are likewiſe called *Puans* or Stinkards, for what reaſon I know not; but before you arrive amongſt them you leave upon your right hand, another ſmall nation

* PANOIRIGOUEIOUHAK.

called

called *Malhomines*, or *Folles Avoires*; that is, wild Oat Indians.

A ſmall river very much incommoded with falls, diſcharges itſelf into the bottom of this bay, and is known under the name of the *Riviere des Renards*, or, river of the Foxes, on account of its neighbourhood to the *Outagamies*, commonly called the *Renards* or Foxes. All this country is extremely beautiful, and that which ſtretches to the ſouthward as far as the river of the Illinois is ſtill more ſo; it is, however, inhabited by two ſmall nations only, who are the *Kicapous*, and the *Muſcoutins*. Some of our geographers have been pleaſed to give the latter the title of the *Nation of Fire*, and their country that of the *Land of Fire*. An equivocal expreſſion has given riſe to this denomination.

Fifty years ago, the Miamis were ſettled on the ſouthern extremity of Lake Michigan, in a place called Chicagou, from the name of a ſmall river, which runs into the lake, the ſource of which is not far diſtant from that of the river of the Illinois; they are at preſent divided into three villages, one of which ſtands on the river St. Joſeph; the ſecond on another river which bears their name, and runs into Lake Erié, and the third upon the river Ouabache, which empties its waters into the Miſſiſippi; theſe laſt are better known by the appellation of *Ouyatanons*. There can be no doubt, that this nation and the Illinois were not long ago the ſame people, conſidering the great affinity which is obſerved between their languages; but I ſhall be able to ſpeak of this with greater certainty when I ſhall be on the ſpot. I ſhall only obſerve farther, that the greateſt part of the Algonquin nations, if we except thoſe who are farther advanced to the

ſouthward, buſy themſelves very little in cultivating the ground, but live almoſt entirely by fiſhing and hunting, and are likewiſe very little diſpoſed to a ſedentary life. A plurality of wives is in uſe amongſt ſome of them; yet, ſo far from encreaſing, they diminiſh every day. There is not one nation in which there are reckoned above ſix thouſand ſouls, and in ſome there are not above two thouſand.

The Huron language is not ſo extenſive as the Algonquin, which is undoubtedly owing to the nations who ſpeak it, having always been of a leſs wandering diſpoſition than the Algonquins. I ſay, the Huron language, to conform myſelf to the opinion moſt commonly received, for ſome ſtill maintain, that the Iroquoiſe is the mother-tongue; be this as it will, all the Indians to the ſouthward of the river St. Laurence, from the river Sorel to the extremity of Lake Erié, and even bordering upon Virginia, belong to this language, and whoever is acquainted with the Huron underſtands them all. Its dialects are multiplied extremely, and there are almoſt as many as there are villages. The five cantons which compoſe the Iroquois republick, have each their own, and all that was heretofore indifferently called Huron was not the ſame language. I have not been able to learn to what language the *Cherokees* belong, a pretty numerous nation, inhabiting thoſe vaſt meadows between Lake Erié and the Miſſiſſippi.

But it ought to be obſerved, that as the greateſt part of the Indians of Canada have had at all times an intercourſe with one another, ſometimes as allies, ſometimes as enemies, though the three mother-tongues of which I have ſpoken have no ſort of affinity or analogy with one another, theſe people, have

have, notwithſtanding found means to do buſineſs together without having occaſion for an interpreter; whether through long cuſtom they have acquired a facility of making themſelves underſtood by ſigns; or, whether they have formed a ſort of a common jargon which they have learned by practice. I am juſt now informed I muſt embark, I ſhall conclude this article the firſt leiſure I have.

*I have the honour to be,* &c.

# LETTER XII.

*Voyage to* Catarocoui. *Deſcription of the country, and of the* Rapides *or falls in the river* St. Lawrence. *Deſcription and ſituation of the Fort. Character and genius of the languages and nations of* Canada. *Origin of the war between the* Iroquois *and* Algonkins.

*Catarocoui, May* 14, 1721.

*Madam,*

I Set out from the Fall of St. Lewis on the 1ſt of May, after cloſing my laſt epiſtle, and lay at the weſtern extremity of the iſland of Montreal, where I did not however arrive till midnight. On the morrow I employed the whole morning in viſiting this country, which is exceeding fine. In the afternoon I croſſed Lake St. Lewis, to go to the place called *les Caſcades*, where I found ſuch of my people, as had gone directly thither, employed in ſewing their canoe, which they had let fall, as they were carrying it on their ſhoulders, and which was thus ſplit from one end to the other. This, Madam, is the pleaſure, and at the ſame time the inconvenience of travelling in ſuch ſmall vehicles, the

leaſt thing in the world breaks them, but then the remedy is both ready and eaſy: all you have to do, is to provide yourſelf with a ſufficient quantity of bark, gum, and roots; beſides, there are few places where you may not meet with gum and roots ſufficient for ſtitching your canoe.

What they call *les Caſcades*, is a *rapide* or fall, ſituated exactly at the upper end of the iſland Perrot, which ſeparates lake St. Lewis from the lake *des deux Montagnes*. To ſhun this, you keep a little to the right, and make your canoes go empty over a part of the river called *le Trou*: you afterwards bring them on ſhore, and then make over a carrying place of half a quarter of a league; that is to ſay, you carry your canoe and all your baggage on your ſhoulders. This is to ſhun a ſecond *rapide* called *le Bouiſſon* or the buſh, being a fine ſheet of water, falling from a flat rock of about a foot and a half high. One might be delivered from this trouble by hollowing a little the bed of a ſmall river, which diſcharges itſelf into another above the *Caſcades*. The expence would be no great matter.

Above the *Bouiſſon*, the river is a large quarter of a league broad, and the lands on both ſides are excellent and well wooded. They begin to clear thoſe lying on the northern bank, and it would be very eaſy to make a highway from the point oppoſite to the iſland of Montreal, as far as the height or creek called *La Galette*. By this means one might ſhun a paſſage of forty leagues, and a navigation rendered almoſt impracticable with *Rapides*, and always exceding tedious. A fort would even be better placed at *La Galette*, where it would alſo be of more ſervice than at Catarocoui, becauſe not a ſingle canoe can paſs it without being ſeen; whereas at Catarocoui,

they

they may ſlip thro' between the iſlands without being perceived. Morever, the lands about *La Galette* are excellent, and for this reaſon there muſt always be plenty of proviſions, which would ſave a conſiderable expence. Beſides, a veſſel might ſail from hence to Niagara in two days with a favourable wind. One of the objects in view, in building the fort of Cataracoui, was the commerce with the Iroquois; but thoſe Indians would as readily come to *La Galette* as to Catarocoui. They would indeed have a little farther to travel, but they would ſhun a paſſage of eight or ten leagues croſs lake Ontario: laſtly, the fort at Galette would cover the whole country lying between the river of the Outawais and the river St. Lawrence; for this country cannot be attacked on the ſide towards the river, by reaſon of the *Rapides*, and nothing is more eaſy than to defend the banks of the great river. I owe theſe obſervations to a commiſſary of the marine, who was ſent by the king in 1706 to viſit all the remote parts of Canada.

The ſame day, the 3d of May, I advanced three leagues, and arrived at the place called *Aux Cedres*. This is the third fall or *rapide*, and has taken its name from the great number of cedars which were formerly in this place: but they have ſince been moſtly cut down. On the 4th I could get no farther than to the fourth rapid, called *le Coteau de Lac*, tho' no more than two leagues and a half from the preceeding, becauſe one of my canoes happened to ſplit near it. Your Grace will not be ſurpriſed at the frequency of theſe ſhipwrecks, after you have been informed of the conſtruction of theſe diminitive gondolas. I think I have already told you there are two ſorts of them; the one of the bark of elm, wider, and of very coarſe workmanſhip, but com-

monly the largeſt. I know no nation but the Iroquois, which have any of this ſort. The others are of the bark of the birch tree, of a breadth leſs proportioned to their length, and much better and neater built. It is theſe latter I am going to deſcribe to you, as all the French, and almoſt all the Indians uſe no other.

They extend the pieces of bark, which are very thick on flat and extremely thin timbers of Cedar-wood. All theſe timbers from head to ſtern are kept in form by little croſs bars, which form the different ſeats in the canoe. Two girders of the ſame materials, to which theſe bars are faſtened or ſewed, bind the whole fabric. Between the timbers and the bark are inſerted ſmall pieces of cedar, ſtill more ſlender than the timbers, and which for all that contribute to ſtrengthen the canoe, the two extremities of which riſe gently, and terminate in two ſharp points bending inwards. Theſe two extremities are perfectly alike; ſo that in order to go backward, the canoe-men have only to change offices. He who happens to be behind ſteers with his oar, ſtill rowing at the ſame time; and the chief employment of he who is forwards, is to take care that the canoe touch nothing that may break it. They all ſit low down, or on their knees, and their oars are a ſort of paddles from five to ſix feet long, commonly of maple. But when they are to ſtem any ſtrong current, they are obliged to make uſe of a pole, and to ſtand upright, and this is called *picquer le fond*, or piercing the bottom. They muſt be well experienced to be able to preſerve their balance in this work, for nothing can be lighter, and conſequently eaſier to overſet, than theſe vehicles, the largeſt of which, with their whole loading, do not draw above half a foot water.

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The bark of which they are built, as well as the timbers, are ſewed with the roots of fir-trees, which are more pliant, and leſs apt to dry than the oſier. All the ſeams are gummed within ſide and without, but they muſt be examined every day, to ſee whether the gum has ſcaled off. The largeſt canoes carry twelve men, two and two, and four thouſand weight, or two tons. Of all the Indians, the moſt expert builders are the Outawais, and in general the Algonquin nations excel the Huron Indians in this trade. There are few French who can make a canoe even ſo much as tolerably well, but in conducting them, they are at leaſt full as ſure to truſt to as the natives. as they exerciſe themſelves at it from their infancy. All theſe canoes, the ſmalleſt not excepted, carry ſail, and with a favourable wind, make twenty leagues a-day. Without ſails you muſt have able canoe-men, to make twelve in ſtill water.

From Coteau de Lac, to lake St. Francis, you have only a large half league. This lake which I croſſed on the 5th, is ſeven leagues long, and at moſt three in breadth where broadeſt. The lands on both ſides of it are low, but ſeem indifferent good. The rout from Montreal thither lies ſomewhat ſouth-weſt, and lake St. Francis lies weſt-ſouth weſt and eaſt-ſouth eaſt. I encamped immediately above it, and in the night was awakened with piercing cries, as of people making lamentations. I was frightened at firſt, but they ſoon made me eaſy, by telling me that it was a kind of cormorants called *Huarts* from their howling. They alſo told me theſe howlings were a ſign of wind the next day, and it actually was ſo.

On the ſixth I paſſed what they call *les Cheſnaux du Lac.* This they call the channels, formed by a multitude of iſlands, which occupy almoſt all the river in this place. I never ſaw a more charming country, and the ſoil appears excellent. The reſt of the day we did nothing but clear the *rapides*: the moſt conſiderable called *le Moulinet*, terrified me only to look at it, and we had much ado to extricate ourſelves from it. I made however this day, almoſt ſeven leagues, and encamped at the foot of the fall called *le long Sault:* this is a *rapide* half a league in length, where canoes cannot ſail up, but half loaded. We paſſed it on the 7th in the morning. We afterwards went on till three in the afternoon under ſail, when the rain obliged us to encamp, and detained us all next day. There even fell on the 8th a little ſnow, and on the night it froze as in France in the month of January. We were however under the ſame parallel with Languedoc. On the ninth we paſſed *le Rapide plat*, or flat fall, about ſeven leagues from the *Sault*, and five from *le Galots*, which is the laſt of the *Rapides*. La Galette is a league and a half farther, where we arrived on the 10th. I could never have wearied of admiring the country between this creek and the Gallots. It is impoſſible to ſee nobler foreſts. I remarked eſpecially oaks of an amazing height.

Five or ſix leagues from la Galette, is an iſland called Tonihata, the ſoil of which appears tolerably fertile, and which is about half a league long. An Iroquois, called the Quaker, for what reaſon I know not, a man of excellent good ſenſe, and much devoted to the French, had obtained the right to it from the Compte de Frontenac. and he ſhews his patent to every body that deſires to ſee it. He has however ſold his lordſhip for four *pots* of brandy; but

but he has reſerved the uſufruit for his own life, and has got together on it eighteen or twenty families of his own nation. I arrived in his iſland on the 12th, and paid him a viſit. I found him at work in his garden; this is not uſual with the Indians; but this perſon affects to follow all the French manners. He received me very well, and would have regaled me, but the fine weather invited me to purſue my voyage. I took my leave of him, and went to paſs the night two leagues from hence in a very pleaſant ſpot. I had ſtill thirteen leagues to ſail before I could reach Catarocoui; the weather was fine, and the night very clear; this prevailed with us to embark at three in the morning. We paſſed thro' the middle of an archipelago called the thouſand iſlands, and I am fully perſuaded there are above five hundred of them. After you have got from among them, you have only a league and an half to ſail to reach Catarocoui. The river here is opener, and is full half a league over. You leave afterwards on your right three large creeks of a good depth, and on the third the fort ſtands.

This fort has four baſtions built of ſtone, which occupy a quarter of a league in circuit. Its ſituation is truly exceeding pleaſant. The banks of the river preſent on all ſide landſkips of great variety, which is alſo the caſe at the entry of lake Ontario, at no more than a ſhort league's diſtance: it is adorned with a number of iſlands of different extent, all of them well wooded, and without any thing to confine the proſpect on that ſide. This lake bore for ſome time the name of St. Lewis, it afterwards obtained that of Frontenac, as did alſo the fort of Catarocoui, of which Count Frontenac was the founder. The lake however inſenſibly recovered its ancient

cient appellation, which is Huron in Iroquois, and the fort that of the place where it ſtands.

The ſoil from la Galette hither is barren enough, but this is only on the out ſkirts; beyond that it is excellent. There is oppoſite to the fort a very pleaſant iſland in the middle of the river. They formerly put ſome hogs in it, which multiplied greatly, and whoſe name it bears. There are two other ſmall iſlands below this, and half a league diſtant from each other; one is called l'Iſle aux Cedres, and the other l'Iſle aux Cerfs. The creek of Catarouoi is double, that is, there is a point very near the middle which advances a great way into the water, and under which there is excellent anchoring ground for the largeſt veſſels. Monſ. de la Salle, ſo celebrated for his diſcoveries and misfortunes, who was once lord of Catarocoui, and governor of the fort, had two or three veſſels here which were ſunk, and are ſtill to be ſeen. Behind the fort is a moraſs, which ſwarms with game. This is at once a diverſion, and an advantage to the garriſon. There was formerly a very large commerce carried on at this place, eſpecially with the Iroquois, and it was to hinder them from carrying their furs to the Engliſh, and to hold themſelves in reſpect, the fort was built. But this commerce laſted not long, and the fort has not been able to prevent thoſe Barbarians from doing us abundance of miſchief. They have ſtill a few families without the fort, as well as ſome of the *Miſſiſaguez*, an Algonquin nation, who have ſtill a town on the weſtern ſhore of lake Ontario, another at Niagara, and a third at *le Detroit*, or the Narrows.

I found here, Madam, an occaſion of ſending my letters to Quebec; I am going to lay hold of ſome hours

hours leiſure to fill this with what I have ſtill to inform you of, with reſpect to the different languages of Canada. Thoſe who have ſtudied them to the bottom, pretend that the three of which I formerly made mention, have all the marks of primitive languages: and it is certain that they have not any common origin. Their pronounciation would be alone ſufficient to prove this. The Sioux Indian hiſſes rather than ſpeaks. The Huron knows none of the labial letters, ſpeaks thro' the throat, and aſpirates almoſt all the ſyllables; the Algonquin pronounces with a ſofter tone, and ſpeaks more naturally. I have not been able to learn any thing particular, with reſpect to the firſt of theſe three tongues; but our ancient miſſionaries have laboured much on the two others, and on their principal dialects: the following is what I have heard ſaid by the moſt able of them.

The Huron language has a copiouſneſs, an energy, and a nobleneſs, which are ſcarce to be found united in any of the fineſt we know, and thoſe whoſe native tongue it is, tho' but a handful of people, ſtill retain a certain elevation of ſoul, which agrees much better with the majeſty of their diſcourſe, than with the wretched eſtate to which they are reduced. Some have imagined they found ſome reſemblance with the Hebrew in it; others, and a much greater, pretend that it has the ſame origin with that of the Greeks; but nothing can be more frivolous than the proofs they alledge in ſupport of it. We are in a ſpecial manner to beware of relying on the vocabulary of the Friar *Gabriel Saghard* a Recollect, which has been cited in favour of this opinion: ſtill leſs on that of James Cartier, and of the Baron de la Hontan. Theſe three authors took at random a few words, ſome from the Huron, and

others

others from the Algonquin tongues, which they very ill remembered, and which often ſignified ſomething very different from what they imagined. How many errors have been occaſioned by ſuch miſtakes in travellers!

The Algonquin language has not the ſame force with the Huron, but much more ſweetneſs and elegance. Both have a richneſs of expreſſion, a variety of turns and phraſes, a propriety of diction, and a regularity, which are perfectly aſtoniſhing. But what is ſtill more wonderful is, that amongſt Barbarians, who never ſtudied the graces of elocution, and who never knew the uſe of letters or writing, they never introduce a bad word, an improper term, or a faulty conſtruction, and that the very children retain the ſame purity in their lighteſt and moſt familiar diſcourſe.

Beſides, their manner of animating whatever they ſay leaves no room to doubt their comprehending all the force of their expreſſions, and all the beauty and delicacy of their language. The dialects which are derived from both, have retained neither the ſame force nor the ſame graces. The Tſonnonthouans for inſtance, one of the five Iroquoiſe cantons, paſs amongſt the Indians for being the moſt ruſtick in their ſpeech of any Indians.

In the Huron language every word is inflected or conjugated; there is a certain art which I cannot well explain to you, by which they diſtinguiſh verbs from nouns, pronouns, adverbs, &c. Simple verbs have a twofold conjugation; one abſolute, and the other relative or reciprocal. The third perſons have two genders, which are all known in their tongues: to wit, the noble and ignoble. As for

for number and tenſe, they have the ſame difference as the Greeks. For inſtance, to relate the account of a voyage, you uſe a different expreſſion, if it is by land, from that you would make uſe of had it been by water. Active verbs are multiplied as often as there are different objects of their action. Thus the verb which ſignifies to eat, has as many different variations as there are different ſorts of eatables. The action is differently expreſſed of an animated or inanimate thing: thus, to ſay you ſee a man or you ſee a ſtone, you muſt make uſe of two different verbs. To make uſe of any thing which belongs to him who uſes it, or to the perſon to whom he addreſſes himſelf, there are ſo many different verbs.

There is ſomething of all this in the Algonquin language, but the manner of it is different, and I am by no means in a condition to inform you of it. However, Madam, if it ſhould follow from the little I have been telling you that the richneſs and variety of theſe languages render them expreſly difficult to be learned, the poverty and barrenneſs into which they have ſince fallen cauſe an equal confuſion. For as theſe people, when we firſt begun to have any intercourſe with them, were ignorant of every thing which was not in uſe among themſelves, or which fell not under the cognizance of their ſenſes, they wanted terms to expreſs them, or elſe had let them fall into deſuetude and obſcurity. Thus having no regular form of worſhip, and forming confuſed ideas of the deity and of every thing relating to religion, and never reflecting on any thing but the objects of their ſenſes, or matters which concerned themſelves or their own affairs, which were ſufficiently confined, and being never accuſtomed to diſcourſe of virtues, paſſions, and many other matters which

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are the common ſubjects of converſation with us, as they neither cultivated the arts, except ſuch as were neceſſary to them, and which were reduced to a very ſmall number; nor any ſcience, minding only ſuch things as were within the reach of their capacity, and having no knowledge or deſire of ſuperfluities, nor any manner of luxury or refinement; when we had occaſion to ſpeak of all theſe topicks to them, there was found a prodigious void in their language, and it became neceſſary, in order to be underſtood by them, to make uſe of troubleſome and perplexing circumlocutions to both them and us. So that after learning their language, we were under a neceſſity to teach them a new one partly compoſed of their own terms, and partly of ours, in order to facilitate the pronounciation of it. As to letters or characters they had none, and they ſupplied this want by a ſort of hieroglyphicks. Nothing confounded them more than to ſee us expreſs ourſelves in writing with the ſame eaſe as by word of mouth.

If any one ſhould aſk me how I came to know that the Sioux, Huron and Algonkin languages are mother tongues rather than ſome others, which we look upon as dialects of theſe, I anſwer that it is impoſſible to be miſtaken in this point, and I aſk no other Proof of it than the words of Monſ. l'Abbè Dubos, which I have already cited: but laſtly, as we cannot judge in this caſe but by compariſon, if by ſuch reflections we are able to determine that all the languages of Canada are derived from theſe three already mentioned, I will acknowledge they do not amount to an abſolute proof of their being primitive, and as old as the firſt inſtitution or invention of languages. I add, that all theſe nations have

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ſomewhat of the Aſiatic genius in their diſcourſe, which gives a figurative turn and expreſſion to things, and which is what has probably made ſome conclude that they are of Aſiatic extraction, which is moreover probable enough in other reſpects.

Not only the nations of the Huron language have always occupied themſelves more than the other Indians in huſbandry and cultivation of their lands; they have alſo been leſs diſperſed, which has produced two effects; for firſt, they are better ſettled, lodged and fortified, but have alſo always been under a better ſort of police, and a more diſtinct and regular form of government. The quality of chief, at leaſt among the true Hurons who are Tionnontatez, is always hereditary. In the ſecond place, till the wars of the Iroquois, of which we have been witneſſes, their country was the moſt populous, tho' polygamy never was in uſe in it. They have alſo the character of being the moſt induſtrious, moſt laborious, moſt expert in the management of their affairs, and moſt prudent in their conduct, which can be attributed to nothing but to that ſpirit of ſociety which they have better retained than the others. This is in a ſpecial manner remarked of the Hurons, who forming at preſent but one nation or people, and being reduced to two middling villages very remote from each other, are, notwithſtanding the ſoul of all their councils in all matters regarding the community. 'Tis true that notwithſtanding this difference, which is not to be diſcovered at firſt glance, there is a ſtrong reſemblance in the genius, manners, and cuſtoms of all the Indians of Canada; but this is owing to the mutual commerce they have carried on with each other for many ages.

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This is the proper place to take notice of the government of theſe Indians, as well as of their cuſtoms and religion: but I can as yet diſcover nothing but a chaos and confuſion, which it is impoſſible for me to unravel. You would certainly blame me ſhould I, like certain travellers, fill up my journal with every thing I had heard, without giving myſelf any trouble to aſcertain the truth, and ſhould retail to you all the extravagant ſtories, charged to the account of our Indians, or which have probably been drawn from their traditions. Theſe traditions are moreover ſo very uncertain, and almoſt always contradict themſelves ſo groſly, that it is almoſt impoſſible to pick out any thing certain or coherent. In fact, how ſhould a people ſuch as they have been found really to be, how ſhould ſuch perſons tranſmit a faithful account of what has paſſed amongſt them ſo many ages, ſince without any means of eaſing or aſſiſting their memory? And can it be conceived that men who think ſo little of the future, ſhould have ſo much concern about the paſt, as to preſerve faithful regiſters of it? Thus, after all the reſearches that could poſſibly be made, we are yet in the dark and to ſeek, as to the ſituation of Canada, when we firſt diſcovered it towards the middle of the ſixteenth century.

The ſole point of their hiſtory which has come down clothed with any degree of probability, is the origin of the war, which Monſ. Champlain found kindled between the Iroquois on one ſide, and the Hurons and Algonquins on the other, and in which he engaged much too far for our real intereſts. I have ever been unable to diſcover the epocha of it, but I do not believe it of very old ſtanding. I will not put an end to this letter with this account: but I warn you before hand, that I don't

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pretend to vouch for this hiſtorical piece, tho' I have it from pretty good hands.

The Algonquins, as I have already obſerved, occupied all that tract of country lying between Quebec, and poſſibly from Tadouſſac to the Lake Nipiſſing, running along the north ſhore of the river St. Lawrence, and tracing upwards the great river, which diſcharges itſelf into the former above the iſland of Montreal. This would incline us to judge that this people was then pretty numerous, and it is certain it has long made a very great figure in this part of America, where the Hurons only were able to diſpute the ſuperiority with them over all the reſt. With reſpect to ſkill in hunting, they had no equal, and ſtood alſo foremoſt in the liſts of fame for proweſs in war. The few remaining of them at this day, have not degenerated from the ancient renown of their fathers, nor have their misfortunes in the leaſt tarniſhed their reputation.

The Iroquois had concluded a kind of treaty of alliance with them, which was equally and greatly advantageous to either party, but which too, in the eſtimation of Indians, (with whom a great huntſman and great warrior are in equal veneration) gave the Algonquins a real ſuperiority over the Iroquois. The latter almoſt wholly taken up with the cultivating their fields, had ſtipulated to pay a certain proportion of their harveſts to the Algonkins, who were on their part obliged to ſhare with them the fruits of their huntings, and to defend them againſt all invaders. Theſe two nations lived in harmony for a conſiderable while, but an unreaſonable piece of pride in the one, and a certain, ſudden, and unexpected diſguſt on the other, broke all bounds of

concord, and embroiled thoſe two nations in an irreconcileable quarrel.

As the winter ſeaſon is that of their great hunting, and as the earth being covered with ſnow, furniſhes no employment to the huſbandman, the Indians of both confederate nations joined camps and wintered abroad in the foreſts. But the Iroquois generally left the hunting to the Algonquins, and contented themſelves with fleaing the beaſts, curing their fleſh, and dreſſing the ſkins. This is now every where the buſineſs of the women: poſſibly this was not then the caſe: be this as it will, the Iroquois were perfectly ſatisfied. Now and then however ſome particular perſons among them had a fancy to make an eſſay at hunting, the Algonquins making no oppoſition to this practice. In this they acted like bad politicians. It happened one winter that a company of the two nations halted in a place where they made ſure of a ſucceſsful hunting; and ſix young Algonquins, accompanied with as many Iroquoiſe of the ſame age, were ſent out to begin the work.

They ſaw at firſt a few elks, and immediately prepared to give them chace. But the Algonquins would not ſuffer the Iroquois to accompany them, and gave them to underſtand that they would have employment enough in fleaing the beaſts they ſhould catch. As ill luck would have it for theſe braggadocio's, three days paſſed without their being able to kill a ſingle elk, tho' they ſtarted a great number. This ſmall ſucceſs mortified them, and probably highly pleaſed the Iroquois, who earneſtly deſired to be allowed to go ſome other way, where they flattered themſelves they would prove more fortunate. Their propoſal was agreed to by the Algonquins,

quins, juſt as David's brethren did formerly, when that young ſhepherd aſked leave to go and fight the giant Goliah. They told them it was vain to pretend to be abler huntſmen than the Algonquins; that their office was to turn the glebe, and that it became them to leave the honourable profeſſion of hunting to their betters, to whom that exerciſe was more ſuitable.

The Iroquois affronted at this anſwer made no reply, but on the night following, they ſet out privately to hunt. The Algonquins, when they awoke, were ſurpriſed to find the Iroquois gone, but their ſurpriſe was ſoon changed into the moſt violent hatred. For the ſame evening they had the mortification to ſee the Iroquois returning loaded with the fleſh of elks. There are no mortals more ſuſceptible of an affront, or who carry their reſentment farther than the Indians. The effects of this were ſudden, for the Iroquois had ſcarce cloſed their eyes, when they were all butcher'd. Such a murder could not be long concealed, and tho' their bodies were buried ſecretly, it was very ſoon known to their nation. They at firſt made their complaints with great moderation, but they inſiſted on having juſtice done on the murderers. They were too much deſpiſed to obtain their requeſt, nor were they thought worthy of receiving the ſmalleſt ſatisfaction.

The Iroquois being thus drove to deſpair, came to a determined reſolution to revenge the contempt ſhewn them, and piqued themſelves more on puniſhing this, than even the murder itſelf. They bound themſelves by oath to periſh to a man, or to have their revenge; but as they did not believe themſelves in a condition to try their fortune againſt the Algonquins, the terror of whoſe name alone kept

all the other nations in awe, they went to a diſtance from them, to try their ſtrength againſt ſome other leſs dreadful enemy, whom they provoked on purpoſe, and after they thought themſelves ſufficiently inured to warfare, they poured all at once upon the Algonquins, and commenced that war of which we ſaw only the concluſion, and which ſet all Canada on fire. This has been continued by the Iroquois with unparalled fury, and with a fierceneſs ſo much the more dreadful, as it was deliberate, and as it had nothing of that headſtrong rage, which hurries men into bad meaſures, and which is ſoon over. Beſides, Indians never think they have enough of revenge, till they have entirely exterminated their enemies; which is likewiſe more true of the Iroquois than of the other nations. They commonly ſay of them, that they advance like foxes, attack like lions, and fly like birds. Thus they are almoſt always ſure of their blow, and their conduct has ſucceeded ſo well with them, that had it not been for the French, there would not have been left ſo much as the memory of any of thoſe nations which dared to oppoſe themſelves to this deluge.

Thoſe who ſuffered moſt were the Hurons, who engaged in this war as allies, auxiliaries, or neighbours to the Algonquins, or becauſe they lay in the way of both. We have ſeen with aſtoniſhment one of the moſt populous and warlike nations on this continent, and the moſt eſteemed of them all either for wiſdom or good ſenſe, almoſt wholly diſappear in a few years. We may even ſay that there is not any nation in all this part of America who have not paid very dearly, for the Iroquois being obliged to take up arms, and I know none in all Canada except the Abenaquis, whom they have not moleſted in their own countries. For after they were once

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entered, and proved their ſucceſs in war, and had taſted of the ſweets of conqueſt, they could no longer remain quiet, like lions, whoſe thirſt after blood is only encreaſed by taſting of it. One would hardly imagine to what an immenſe diſtance they have gone to ſeek out their enemies, and to give them battle. Notwithſtanding, by dint of making continual war, as they were not without ſeveral checks at different times, they have found themſelves extremely diminiſhed; and were it not for the ſlaves they have made on all hands, moſt of whom they have adopted, their ſituation would be equally miſerable with that of the nations they have ſubdued.

What happened in this reſpect to the Iroquois, may with ſtill more reaſon be ſaid of the other Indians in this country, and we are not to wonder if, as I have already remarked, theſe nations diminiſh daily in a very ſenſible manner. For tho' their wars appear leſs ruinous than ours at firſt ſight, they are however much more ſo in proportion. The moſt numerous of theſe nations perhaps never contained above ſixty thouſand ſouls, and there ſometimes happen battles, in which caſe there is much blood ſpilt. A ſurpriſe, or *coup de main*, ſometimes deſtroys a whole town; oftentimes the fear of an irruption of an enemy makes a whole canton be deſerted, when the fugitives to ſhun the ſword of the enemy, or their torturing puniſhments, expoſe themſelves to die of hunger and miſery in the woods, or on mountains, having ſeldom leiſure or conſideration enough to carry the neceſſary proviſions to ſuch places. This happened in the laſt age to a great number of Hurons and Algonquins, whoſe fate it has been impoſſible to learn.

*I am*, &c.

# LETTER XIII.

*Deſcription of the country to the river of the* Onnontagués. *Of the flux and reflux in the great lakes of* Canada. *Manner in which the* Indians *ſing the war-ſong. Of their God of War. Manner of declaring war. Of the collars of* Wampum *or* Porcelain, *and the* Calumet, *with their cuſtoms relating to peace and war.*

*Anſe de la Famine*, May 16*th*, 1721.

*Madam*,

HERE I am detained by a contrary wind, which has the appearance of laſting ſome time, and keeping me above a day in one of the worſt places in the world. I ſhall endeavour to divert my chagrin by writing to you. Whole armies of thoſe pigeons we call turtles are continually paſſing here, and if one of them would take charge of my letters, perhaps, you might hear of me before I leave this place; but the Indians have not as yet thought of training up theſe birds to this piece of dexterity, as it is ſaid the Arabians and ſeveral other nations did formerly.

I embarked on the 14th, preciſely at the ſame hour, on which I arrived the evening before at Catarocoui. I had only ſix leagues to make, in order to gain the iſland *aux Chevreuils*, or of Roebucks, where there is a good harbour capable of receiving large barks; but my Canadians having forgot to examine their canoe, and the ſun having melted the gum in ſeveral places, it admitted the water on all ſides, and I was obliged to ſtop two hours in order to repair it in one of the iſlands at the entrance of Lake Ontario; we continued our courſe afterwards till paſt ten at night, but not being able to gain the iſland *aux Chevreuils*, we were obliged to paſs the remainder of the night at the corner of the foreſt.

Here I obſerved for the firſt time vines in the woods. There were almoſt as many as there were trees, and they always climbed quite to their top. This was the firſt time I had made this obſervation having never ſtopt before but in open fields; but I am told this continues all the way to Mexico. Theſe vines are very thick at bottom, and bear great plenty of grapes, which, however, are no larger than peaſe, but this cannot be otherwiſe, ſeeing they are neither pruned nor cultivated. When ripe they afford excellent feeding for the bears, who climb to the tops of the higheſt trees in queſt of them. After all, they have only the leavings of the birds, which would ſoon rob whole foreſts of their vintage.

Next day I ſet out early in the morning, and at eleven o'clock ſtopt at the iſland *aux Gallots*, three leagues beyond the iſland *aux Chevres*, in 43 deg. 33 min. lat. I reimbarked a little after mid-day, and made a traverſe of a league and a half, in order

der to gain the *Point of the Traverſe*; for had I coaſted along the main-land in order to get at that place, from that where I ſpent the night, I ſhould have had a courſe to make of above forty leagues, which way, however, muſt be taken when the lake is not very calm; for if it be ever ſo little agitated, the waves are as heavy as thoſe at open ſea. It is not even poſſible to range along the coaſt when the wind is any thing large.

From the point of the Iſle *aux Gallots*, you ſee to the weſtward the river of *Chauguen*, formerly the river of *Onnontagué*, at the diſtance of fourteen leagues. As the lake was calm, as there was no appearance of bad weather, and as we had a ſmall breeze at eaſt, juſt ſufficient to fill our ſails, I took a reſolution to ſteer directly for that river, in order to ſave a circuit of fifteen or twenty leagues. My guides who had more experience than I, imagined this enterprize hazardous, but yielded out of complaiſance to my opinion. The beauty of the country which lay on the left hand, did not tempt me, any more than the ſalmon and great quantities of other excellent fiſh, which are taken in the ſix fine rivers, which lie at the diſtance of two or three leagues from one another*. We therefore bore away, and till four o'clock had no reaſon to repent it; but then the wind roſe all on a ſudden, and we ſhould have been very well pleaſed to have been cloſe in with the land. We made towards the neareſt, from which we ſtill were three leagues, and had great difficulty to gain it. At laſt about ſeven

* The river of Aſſumption is a league from the point of the Traverſe, that of Sables three leagues farther; that of la Planche two leagues beyond the former, that of La Grande Famine two leagues more, that of La Petite Famine one league, and that of La groſſe Ecorce another league.

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in the evening we landed at *Anſe de la Famine*, or the Creek of Famine, ſo called, becauſe M. de la Barre, governor-general of New-France, had very near loſt his whole army there by hunger, and other diſtempers, when he was going upon an expedition againſt the Iroquois.

It was high time we ſhould arrive, the wind was ſtrong, and the waves ran ſo high that no one durſt have croſſed the Seine oppoſite to the Louvre, in ſuch a ſituation as we were then in. This place is indeed very proper for deſtroying an army which ſhould depend on hunting and fiſhing for ſubſiſtence, beſides that the air ſeems to be extremely unwholſome. Nothing, however, can exceed the beauty of the foreſt, which covers all the banks of this lake. The white and red oaks raiſe their heads as high as the clouds, and there is another tree of a very large kind, the wood of which is hard but brittle, and bears a great reſemblance to that of the plane-tree; its leaves have five points, are of a middle ſize, of a very beautiful green in the inſide, but whitiſh without. It has got the name of the cotton-tree, becauſe it bears a ſhell nearly of the thickneſs of an Indian Cheſnut-tree, containing a ſort of cotton which, however ſeems to be good for nothing.

As I was walking on the banks of the lake I obſerved that it ſenſibly loſes ground on this ſide, the land being here much lower and more ſandy for the ſpace of half a league, than it is beyond it. I likewiſe obſerved that in this lake, and I am told that the ſame thing happens in all the reſt; there is a ſort of flux and reflux almoſt inſtantaneous, the rocks near the banks being covered with water, and uncovered again ſeveral times in the ſpace of

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a quarter of an hour, even ſhould the ſurface of the lake be very calm, with ſcarce a breath of wind. After reflecting for ſome time on this appearance, I imagined it was owing to the ſprings at the bottom of the lakes, and to the ſhock of their currents with thoſe of the rivers, which fall into them from all ſides, and thus produce thoſe intermitting motions.

But would you believe it, Madam, that at this ſeaſon of the year, and in the 43d deg. of latitude, there is not as yet ſo much as a ſingle leaf upon the trees, though we have ſometimes as hot weather as with you in the month of July. This is undoubtedly owing to the earth's having been covered with ſnow for ſeveral months, and not being as yet ſufficiently warm to open the pores of the roots, and to cauſe the ſap to aſcend. The *Grande* and *Petite Tamine* ſcarce deſerve the name of rivers; they are only brooks, eſpecially the latter, but are pretty well ſtocked with fiſh. There are eagles here of a prodigious ſize, my people have juſt now thrown down a neſt, in which there was a cart-load of wood and two eaglets, not as yet feathered, but as big as the largeſt Indian pullets. They have eat them, and declare they were very good. I return to Catarocoui, where, the night I paſſed there, I was witneſs to a pretty curious ſcene.

About ten or eleven o'clock at night, juſt as I was going to retire, I heard a cry, which I was told was the war-cry, and ſoon after ſaw a troop of the Miſſiſaquez enter the fort ſinging all the way. It ſeems, for ſome years paſt, theſe Indians have been engaged in a war which the Iroquois carried on againſt the Cherokees, a numerous nation inhabiting a fine country to the ſouthward of Lake Erié; and

and ſince that time their young men have had a ſtrange itching to be in action. Three or four of theſe bravoes equipped as if they had been going to a maſquerade, with their faces painted in ſuch a manner as to inſpire horror, and followed by almoſt all the Indians in the neighbourhood of the fort, after having gone through all the cabbins ſinging their war ſongs to the ſound of the chichikoué, which is a ſort of calabaſh filled with little flint ſtones, came to perform the ſame ceremony through all the apartments in the fort, in order to do honour to the commandant and the reſt of the officers.

I own to you, Madam, that this ceremony has ſomething in it which inſpires one with horror when ſeen for the firſt time, and I had not been as yet ſo fully ſenſible as I then was, that I was among barbarians. Their ſongs are at all times melancholy and doleful; but here they were to the laſt degree frightful, occaſioned perhaps entirely by the darkneſs of the night, and the apparatus of this feſtival, for ſuch it is amongſt the Indians. This invitation was made to the Iroquois, who finding the war with the Cherokees begin to turn burthenſome, or not being in the humour, required time for deliberation, after which every one returned home.

It ſhould ſeem, Madam, that in theſe ſongs they invoke the god of war, whom the Hurons call *Areſkoui*, and the Iroquois *Agreſkouë*; I know not what name he bears in the Algonquin languages. But it is not a little ſurpriſing, that the Greek word Αρης, which is Mars, and the god of war in all thoſe countries which have followed the theology of Homer, ſhould be the root whence ſeveral terms in the Huron and Iroquoiſe languages ſeem to be derived,

rived, which have a relation to war. *Aregouen* ſignifies to make war, and is conjugated in this manner: *Garego*, I make war; *Sarego*, thou makeſt war; *Arego*, he makes war. Moreover, Areſkoui is not only the Mars of theſe people, but likewiſe the ſovereign of the gods, or as they expreſs it, the Great Spirit, the Creator and Maſter of the Univerſe, the Genius who governs all things; but it is chiefly in warlike expeditions that they invoke him; as if the attribute, which does him greateſt honour, was, that of being the God of armies. His name is their war-cry before battle, and in the heat of the engagement: in their marches likewiſe they repeat it often, as if to encourage one another, and to implore his aſſiſtance.

To take up the hatchet, is to declare war; every private perſon has a right to do it, and nothing can be ſaid againſt him; unleſs it be among the Hurons and Iroquois, where the matrons command and prohibit a war as ſeems good unto them; we ſhall ſee in its proper place how far their authority extends in theſe matters. But if a matron wants to engage any one who does not depend on her, to levy a a party for war, whether it be to appeaſe the manes of her huſband, ſon, or near relation, or whether it be to procure priſoners, in order to replace thoſe in her cabbin, of whom death or captivity has deprived her; ſhe muſt make him a preſent of a collar of Wampum, and ſuch an invitation is ſeldom found ineffectual.

When the buſineſs is to declare war in form between two or three nations, the manner of expreſſing it is *to hang the kettle over the fire*; which has its origin without doubt from the barbarous cuſtom of eating their priſoners, and thoſe who have been killed

killed after boiling them. They likewiſe ſay ſimply, that they are going to *eat ſuch a nation*, which ſignifies that they are going to make war againſt them in the moſt deſtructive and outrageous manner, and indeed they ſeldom do otherwiſe. When they intend to engage an ally in the quarrel, they ſend him a porcelain or wampum, which is a large ſhell, in order to invite him to drink the blood, or as the terms made uſe of ſignify, the broth of the fleſh of their enemies. After all, this practice may have been very antient, without our being able to infer from thence, that theſe people have always been Anthropophagi, or Man-eaters. It was, perhaps, at firſt, only an allegorical manner of ſpeaking, with examples of which the ſcripture often furniſhes us. David, in all appearance, had not to do with enemies who were accuſtomed to eat human fleſh, when he ſays: *Dum appropriant ſuper me nocentes ut edunt carnes meas.* Pſalms xxvi. 2. Afterwards ſome nations becoming ſavage and barbarous, may have ſubſtituted the reality in the room of the figure.

I took notice that the porcelain in theſe countries are ſhells; theſe are found on the coaſts of New-England and Virginia; they are channelled, drawn out lengthwiſe, a little pointed, without ears and pretty thick. The fiſh contained in theſe ſhells are not good to eat; but the inſide is of ſo beautiful a varniſh with ſuch lively colours, that it is impoſſible to imitate it by art. When the Indians went altogether naked, they made the ſame uſe of them which our firſt parents did of the leaves of the fig-tree, when they diſcovered their nakedneſs and were aſhamed at it. They likewiſe hung them at their necks, as being the moſt precious things they had, and to this day their greateſt riches and fineſt

fineſt ornaments conſiſt of them. In a word, they entertain the ſame notion of them that we do of gold, ſilver, and precious ſtones; in which they are ſo much the more reaſonable, as in a manner they have only to ſtoop to procure riches as real as ours, for all that depends upon opinion. James Cartier in his memoirs makes mention of a ſhell of an uncommon ſhape, which he found, as he ſays, in the iſland of Montreal; he calls it *Eſurgni*, and affirms it had the virtue of ſtopping a bleeding at the noſe. Perhaps, it is the ſame we are now ſpeaking of; but they are no longer to be found in the iſland of Montreal, and I never heard of any but the ſhells of Virginia which had the property Cartier ſpeaks of.

There are two ſorts of theſe ſhells, or to ſpeak more properly two colours, one white and the other violet. The firſt is moſt common, and perhaps, on that account leſs eſteemed. The ſecond ſeems to have a finer grain when it is wrought; the deeper its colour is, the more it is valued. Small cylindrical grains are made of both, which are bored through and ſtrung upon a thread, and of theſe *the branches and collars* of Porcelain or *Wampum* are made. The branches are no more than four or five threads, or ſmall ſtraps of leather, about a foot in length, on which the grains or beads of Wampum are ſtrung. The collars are in the manner of fillets or diadems formed of theſe branches, ſewed together with thread, making four, five, ſix or ſeven rows of beads, and of a proportionable length; all which depends on the importance of the affair in agitation, and dignity of the perſon to whom the collar is preſented.

By

By a mixture of beads of different colours, they form ſuch figures and characters as they have a mind, which often ſerve to diſtinguiſh the affairs in queſtion. Sometimes the beads are plaited, at leaſt it is certain that they frequently ſend red collars when a war is in agitation. Theſe collars are carefully preſerved, and not only compoſe part of the publick treaſures, but are likewiſe their regiſters or annals, and ought to be ſtudied by thoſe who have the charge of the archives, which are depoſited in the cabbin of the chief. When there are two chiefs in a village of equal authority, they keep the treaſures and archives by turns for one night, but this night, at leaſt at preſent, is a whole year. Collars are never uſed but in affairs of conſequence; for thoſe of leſs importance they make uſe of branches, or ſtrings of porcelain, ſkins, blankets, maïz, either in grain or flour, and ſuch like things; for all theſe make a part of the publick treaſure. When they invite a village or a nation to enter into an alliance, ſometimes they ſend them a pair of colours tinged with blood; but this practice is modern, and there is good reaſon to believe, they have taken the hint from the white colours of the French, and the red of the Engliſh. It is even ſaid, that we ourſelves firſt introduced it amongſt them, and that they have thought of tinging theirs with blood, when the queſtion was to declare war.

The calumet is no leſs ſacred among the Indians than the collar of Wampum; it has even, if we may believe them a divine original, for they maintain, it was a preſent made them by the Sun. It is more in uſe among the ſouthern and weſtern nations, than among the eaſtern and northern, and is more frequently employed for peace than for war. *Calumet* is a Norman word, being a corruption of *Chaliorveau*,

*liorveau*, and the calumet of the Indians is properly the ſtalk of the pipe, but under that name is underſtood the whole pipe as well as the ſtalk. The ſtalk is very long in calumets of ceremony, and the pipe has the ſhape of our old hammers for arms; it is commonly made of a ſort of reddiſh marble, very eaſy to work, and found in the country of the Aiouez, beyond the Miſſiſſippi. The ſtalk is of a light wood, painted with different colours, and adorned with the heads, tails, and feathers of the moſt beautiful birds, which in all probability is only intended for ornament.

The cuſtom is to ſmoke in the calumet when it is accepted, and perhaps, there is no example of an engagement entered into in this manner being violated. The Indians at leaſt are perſuaded, that the great ſpirit never ſuffers an infraction of this kind to eſcape with impunity. If in the midſt of a battle, an enemy preſents a calumet, it may be refuſed; but if it is accepted, their arms on both ſides muſt immediately be laid down. There are calumets for all different ſorts of treaties. When an exchange is agreed upon in trade they preſent a calumet, in order to cement the bargain, which renders it in ſome meaſure ſacred. When a war is in agitation, not only the ſtalk, but even the feathers with which it is adorned are red; ſometimes they are red only on one ſide, and it is pretended, that from the manner in which the feathers are diſpoſed, they know at firſt ſight to what nation it is to be preſented.

It cannot be doubted, but that the Indians, by cauſing thoſe to ſmoke in the calumet, with whom they ſeek to enter into a treaty of alliance or commerce, intend to take the ſun for a witneſs, and in

ſome meaſure for a guarantee of their mutual engagements; for they never fail to blow the ſmoke towards that luminary; but that from this practice, and from the ordinary uſe of the calumet, we ought to infer as ſome have done, that this pipe might originally be the Caduceus of Mercury, appears to me by ſo much the leſs probable, as the Caduceus had no manner of relation to the Sun, and as nothing is to be found in the traditions of the Indians, by which we can imagine they had ever the leaſt acquaintance with the Grecian Mythology. It would, in my opinion, be much more natural to ſuppoſe, that theſe people, informed by experience that the ſmoke of their tobacco diſſipated the vapours of the brain, made their heads clearer, raiſed their ſpirits, and put them into a better condition for managing affairs, have for that reaſon introduced it into their councils, where, indeed, they have the pipe continually in their mouths, and that after having maturely deliberated and taken their reſolutions, they imagined they could not find a more proper ſymbol for affixing a ſeal to what had been agreed upon, nor a pledge more capable of ſecuring its execution, than the inſtrument which had had ſo much ſhare in their deliberations. Perhaps, Madam, you may think it more ſimple, ſtill to ſay, that theſe people imagined nothing could be a more natural ſign of a ſtrict union, than ſmoking out of the ſame pipe, eſpecially, if the ſmoke be offered to a Divinity, who ſets the ſeal of religion upon it. To ſmoke then out of the ſame pipe, in ſign of alliance, is the ſame thing as to drink out of the ſame cup, as has been at all times the practice among ſeveral nations. Such cuſtoms as theſe are too natural an offſpring of the human mind, for us to ſeek for myſteries in them.

The

The ſize and ornaments of the calumets, which are preſented to perſons of diſtinction, on occaſions of importance, are not ſo particular that we need ſearch far for their motives. When men begin to have ever ſo little commerce together, or to entertain mutual reſpect for one another, they are ſoon accuſtomed to have certain regards for one another, chiefly on occaſions when publick affairs are in agitation, or when they want to engage the good-will of thoſe with whom they have buſineſs to tranſact, and hence proceeds the care they take to give a greater magnificence to the preſents they make one another. But it is to the *Panis*, a nation ſettled on the banks of the Miſſouri, who extend themſelves a good way towards New Mexico, that it is pretended the Sun gave the calumet. But theſe Indians have probably done like a great many other people, endeavoured to ennoble by the marvellous, a cuſtom of which they were the authors; and all that can be concluded from this tradition, is, that the Panis paid the Sun a more ancient and diſtinguiſhed worſhip than the other nations of that part of the continent of America, and that they were the firſt who thought of making the calumet a ſymbol of alliance. In the laſt place, if the calumet had been in its inſtitution the caduceus of Mercury, it would have only been employed in affairs relating to peace or commerce, whereas it is certain, that it is uſed in treaties that have war for their object.

Theſe hints, Madam, I thought neceſſary, in order to give you a perfect knowledge of what relates to the wars of the Indians, about which I ſhall entertain you in my next letters till I have exhauſted the ſubject; at leaſt, if they are digreſſions, they are not altogether foreign to my deſign. Beſides,

a traveller endeavours to diſpoſe in the leaſt diſagreeable manner he can every thing that he learns upon his rout.

*I am*, &c.

LETTER

# LETTER XIV.

*Deſcription of the country from the* Anſe de la Famine *to the* Riviere des Sables. *Motives of the Indians for going to war. Departure of the warriors for the campain, with what precedes their ſetting out. Their manner of taking leave of their relations and countrymen. Their arms offenſive and defenſive. Their care in taking along with them their tutelary gods. Particularities of the country as far as Niagara.*

*Riviere des Sables, May* 19, 1721.

*Madam,*

I Am now once more ſtopped by a contrary wind, which aroſe the moment we were likelieſt to make moſt ſpeed. It even ſurpriſed us ſo abruptly, that we would have been in great danger had we not fortunately met with this ſmall river to take ſanctuary in. You muſt acknowledge there are a multitude of inconveniencies and diſappointments to cope with in ſuch a voyage as this. It is a very ſad thing to ſail a hundred, and ſometimes two hundred leagues without meeting with a ſingle houſe,

or ſeeing one human creature; to be engaged in a voyage of two or three hundred leagues to ſhun a paſſage of twenty, made with many difficulties, and with the hazard of loſing one's life by the caprice of the winds; to be ſtopped, as it ſometimes happens, for whole weeks, on ſome point or barren ſhore, or if it ſhould happen to rain, to be obliged to take up one's lodging under ſome canoe, or in a tent: if the wind proves ſtrong we muſt ſeek for ſhelter in ſome wood, where we are expoſed to be cruſhed to death by the fall of ſome tree. Theſe inconveniencies might be ſhunned in part by the building veſſels for ſailing on the lakes; but in order to have this advantage, the trade muſt be better able to afford it.

We are now on the borders of the Iroquois cantons, which is an exceeding delightful country. We embarked early yeſterday in the fineſt weather imaginable. There was not a ſingle breath of wind, and the lake was as ſmooth as glaſs. About nine or ten o'clock we paſſed by the mouth of the river of Onnantague, which ſeemed to me to be about 120 feet in breadth. The lands near it are ſomewhat low, but exceeding well wooded. Almoſt all the rivers which water the Iroquois cantons diſcharge themſelves into this, the ſource of which is a fine lake called *Gannentatha*, on the banks of which are ſaltpits. Towards half an hour paſt eleven we made ſail by favour of a ſmall breeze at north-eaſt, and in a few hours puſhed on as far as the Bay *des Goyogouins*, which is ten leagues from the Riviere of Onnontague. The whole coaſt in this tract is diverſified with ſwamps and high lands ſomewhat ſandy, covered with the fineſt trees, eſpecially oaks, which ſeem as if planted by the hand of men.

A ſtrong

A ſtrong gale of wind from the land, which overtook us oppoſite to the Bay des Goyogouins, obliged us to take ſanctuary in it. This is one of the fineſt ſpots I have ever ſeen. A peninſula well wooded advances from the middle, and forms a kind of theatre. On the left as you enter, you perceive in a bight a ſmall iſland which conceals the mouth of a river, by which the Goyogouins deſcend to the lake. The wind did not continue long, we therefore ſet out again, and made three or four leagues farther. This morning we embarked before ſun-riſe, and have actually made five or ſix leagues. I know not how long the north-weſt wind may detain us here. Whilſt I wait till a favourable gale ariſes, I will reſume my relation of the wars of the Indians, where I left it off.

Theſe Barbarians rarely refuſe to engage in a war, when invited by their allies. They commonly do not even want any invitation to take up arms; the ſmalleſt motive, even a very nothing, is with them cauſe ſufficient. But above all, vengeance is their darling paſſion; they have always ſome old or new grudge to ſatisfy; for no length of time ever cloſes thoſe ſort of wounds, let them be ever ſo ſlight. Thus one can never be ſure that the peace is fully eſtabliſhed between two nations who have been long enemies: on the other hand, the deſire of replacing the dead by priſoners to appeaſe their manes; the caprice of a private perſon, a dream which every one explains at random, with other reaſons and pretexts equally frivolous, will often occaſion a party to go to war, who thought of nothing leſs the day before.

'Tis true, theſe ſmall expeditions, without conſent of the council, are generally without any great

conſequence, and as they demand no great preparations, there is little attention paid to them; but gegerally ſpeaking, they are not much diſpleaſed to ſee the youth exerciſed, and keep themſelves in breath, and they muſt have very cogent reaſons to oppoſe ſuch a reſolution; beſides, they rarely employ authority to this end, every one being maſter of his own actions: But they try to intimidate ſome by falſe reports which they take care to ſpread abroad; others they ſollicit underhand; they engage the chief to break off the party by preſents, which is no difficult matter; for a dream, true or falſe, no matter which, is all that is requiſite to accompliſh it. Amongſt ſome nations their laſt reſource is to addreſs themſelves to the nations, which is generally efficacious, but they never have recourſe to this method, but when the affair is of much conſequence.

A war in which the whole nation is concerned, is not ſo eaſily put an end to: they weigh with much deliberation the advantages and diſadvantages of it, and whilſt they are conſulting, they take great care to remove every thing that may give the enemy the leaſt ſuſpicion of their intention of breaking with him. The war being once reſolved upon, they conſider firſt the providing the neceſſary proviſions, and the equipage of the warriors, which require no long time. Their dances, ſongs, feaſts, and certain ſuperſtitious ceremonies which vary greatly in different nations, require a much greater length of time.

He who is to command never thinks of levying ſoldiers, till he has obſerved a faſt of ſeveral days, during which he is bedawb'd with black, holds no manner of diſcourſe with any one, invokes day and night his tutelar genius, and above all he is very careful

careful to obſerve what dreams he has. Their firm perſuaſion, according to the preſumptuous genius of thoſe Barbarians, that he is marching forth to certain victory, never fails to inſpire him with ſuch dreams as he deſires. The faſt being ended, he aſſembles his friends, and holding a collar of porcelain in his hand, addreſſes them in words like theſe: My brethren, the Great Spirit is the author of what I ſpeak, and has inſpired me with the thought of what I am going to put in execution. The blood of ſuch an one is not yet wiped away, his corpſe is not yet covered, and I am going to perform this duty to him. He ſets forth in like manner the other motives which move him to take up arms. "I am therefore reſolved to march to ſuch a place "to take ſcalps, or to make priſoners;" Or, "I will "eat ſuch a nation. Should I periſh in this glo-"rious enterprize, or ſhould any of my compa-"nions in it loſe his life, this collar will ſerve to re-"ceive us, that we may not be for ever hid in the "duſt, or in the mire." That is, perhaps, it will be the recompence of him who buries the dead.

As he pronounces theſe laſt words, he lays the collar on the ground, and he who takes it up, by ſo doing declares himſelf his lieutenant; he then thanks him for his zeal to revenge his brother, or to maintain the honour of the nation. Then they ſet water on to warm, waſh the chief from his dawbing, dreſs, anoint with oil or fat, or paint his hair. They paint his face with different colours, and clothe him in his fineſt robe. Thus adorned, he ſings with a hollow voice the ſong of death; his ſoldiers, that is to ſay, all thoſe who have offered themſelves to accompany him (for no one is ever compelled) thunder out one after another their war ſong; for every one has one peculiar to himſelf, which no other perſon

ſon is allowed to uſe; and there are even ſome which are coveted by certain families.

After this previous meaſure, which paſſes in ſome remote place, and often in a ſtove, the chief communicates his project to the council, who ſit upon it, without ever admitting him who is the author of it, to be preſent. As ſoon as his project is approved of he makes a feaſt; at which the chief, and ſometimes the only, diſh is a dog. Some pretend that this animal is offered to the god of war, before he is put in to the kettle, and poſſibly this may be the practice amongſt ſome nations. I am glad, Madam, to have this opportunity of adverti-ſing you once for all, that I don't pretend to ſay that what I relate on this ſubject, is abſolutely univerſal amongſt all the nations. But it ſeems certain, that on the occaſion I here ſpeak of they make many invocations to their genii, good and evil, and above all to the god of war.

All this takes up ſeveral days, or rather the ſame thing is repeated for ſeveral days running: but tho' every one ſeems wholly employed in theſe feſtivals, each family takes its meaſures for obtaining a ſhare of the priſoners, either to replace their loſſes, or to revenge their dead. In this view they make preſents to the chief, who on his ſide gives both his promiſe and pledges beſides. In default of priſoners they demand ſcalps, which are more eaſily obtained. In ſome places, as amongſt the Iroquois, as ſoon as a military expedition is reſolved on they ſet on the war kettle, and advertiſe their allies to ſend or bring ſomething to it, to ſhew their approbation of the enterprize, and their readineſs to take part in it.

All thoſe who enliſt themſelves, give alſo to the chief, as a token of their engagement, a bit of wood with their mark upon it, and he who after that ſhould draw back, would never be ſafe while he lived; at leaſt he would be diſhonoured for ever. The party once formed, the war chief prepares a a new feaſt, to which the whole village is invited, and before any thing is taſted, he, or an orator for him, and in his name, accoſts them in ſuch words as theſe: "My brethren, I know I am not worthy "to be called a man, tho' you all know that I "have more than once looked an enemy in the "face. We have been ſlaughtered; the bones of "ſuch and ſuch perſons are yet unburied, they cry "out againſt us, and we muſt ſatisfy their requeſt. "They were once men as well as we; how there-"fore could we ſo ſoon forget them, and ſit ſo long "in this lethargy on our matreſſes? In a word, the "genius who is the guardian of my honour and "the author of my renown, inſpires me with "the reſolution to revenge them. Youth, take "courage, anoint your hair, paint your viſages, "fill your quivers, cauſe the foreſts reſound with "the voice of your military ſongs, let us eaſe and "comfort the deceaſed, and ſhew them that we "have avenged them."

After this diſcourſe, and the applauſes with which it never fails to be attended, the chief proceeds into the midſt of the aſſembly, his hatchet in his hand, and ſings his ſong; all his ſoldiers make reſponſes in the ſame manner, and ſwear to ſecond him or to die in the attempt. All this is accompanied with geſtures highly expreſſive of their reſolution never to give ground to an enemy; but it is to be remarked that not a ſyllable eſcapes any ſoldier, which ſignifies the leaſt dependance. The whole conſiſts in a pro-

a promiſe to act with perfect unanimity and in concert. Beſides, the engagement they lay themſelves under, requires great acknowledgements on the part of the chief. For inſtance, as often as any one in the public dances ſtrikes the poſt with his hatchet, and recals to memory his moſt ſignal exploits, as is always the cuſtom, the chief under whoſe conduct he performed them, is obliged to make him a preſent; at leaſt this is uſual among ſome nations.

Theſe ſongs are followed with dances; ſometimes this is no more than a fierce ſort of march, but in cadence; at others it is done by very lively geſtures, expreſſive of the operations of a campaign, and always in cadence. Laſtly, the whole ceremony concludes with a feaſt. The war chief is no more than a ſpectator of it, with his pipe in his mouth; it is even common enough in every conſiderable feaſt, for him who does the honours of it, to touch nothing at all himſelf. The following days, and till the departure of the warriors, many things paſs, the recital of which is not worth notice, and which are beſides neither eſſential nor generally practiſed: but I cannot forget a cuſtom ſingular enough, and wit.. which the Iroquois in particular never diſpenſe: it ſeems to have been deviſed to diſcover ſuch perſons as are endued with natural good ſenſe, and what is called mother-wit, and are capable of governing themſelves as well as others; for theſe Indians whom we imagine barbarous people, believe it impoſſible for any one to poſſeſs true courage without being abſolute maſter of his paſſions, or if he cannot endure the moſt cruel reverſes that can poſſibly happen. The affair is this.

The moſt ancient of the military company treat the young people, at leaſt ſuch as have never ſeen an

an enemy, with all the ſcorn and inſults they are capable of deviſing. They throw hot embers on their heads; they throw the moſt cruel reproaches in their teeth; they in ſhort load them with all manner of injuries, and carry this treatment to the greateſt exceſs. All this muſt be endured with the utmoſt inſenſibility; to give at ſuch occaſions the leaſt ſign of impatience, would be ſufficient to cauſe them be declared for ever incapable of bearing arms: But when this is done by perſons of the ſame age, as it often happens, the aggreſſor muſt take care to do nothing wantonly, or out of private pique, or otherwiſe he would be obliged, when the ſport is ended, to attone for the affront by a preſent. I ſay, when the ſport is ended, for whilſt it laſts they are obliged to bear every thing without being angry, tho' this ſort of paſtime often goes ſo far as the throwing big burning brands at each others heads, and giving heavy blows with cudgels.

As the hope of having their wounds cured, ſhould they happen to receive any, is no ſmall encouragement for the braveſt to expoſe themſelves boldly to danger, they afterwards prepare the drugs for this purpoſe, and this is the office of their jugglers. I will ſome other time tell you what ſort of perſons theſe are. The whole town being aſſembled, one of theſe quacks declares he is going to communicate to the roots and plants, of which he takes care to provide good ſtore, the virtue of healing all ſorts of wounds, and even of reſtoring the dead to life. He falls immediately a ſinging; the other quacks make reſponſes to him, and it is believed that during the concert, which would not appear to your ear very melodious, and which is accompanied with many grimaces on the part of the actors, the medicinal quality is communicated to the plants. The chief jug-

gler

gler then makes trial of them; he begins with bleeding his own lips, he applies his remedy; the blood which the impoſtor ſucks in very dextrouſly ceaſes to flow, and the whole auditory cries out, *A miracle, a miracle.* After this, he takes a dead animal, and leaves the ſpectators as much time to conſider as they chuſe, when by means of a cahule or pipe inſerted under the tail, he cauſes it to move by blowing his herbs into its throat when the exclamations of admiration are redoubled. Laſtly, the whole company of jugglers makes the tour of the cabbins, ſinging the praiſes and virtues of their remedies. Theſe tricks at bottom deceive no one, but ſerve to amuſe the multitude, and cuſtom muſt be obeyed.

The following is another uſage peculiart o the Miamis, and perhaps to ſome other nations in the neighbourhood of Louiſiana. I have extracted it from the memoirs of a Frenchman who was eye-witneſs of it. After a ſolemn feaſt they placed, ſays he, on a kind of altar, ſome figures of pagods, made of bears ſkins, the heads of which were painted green. All the Indians paſſed before this altar, making their genuflexions, or bending their knees, and the quacks led the band, holding in their hand a ſack, in which were incloſed all theſe things which were wont to be uſed in their invocation or worſhip. He was the cleverest fellow who made the moſt extravagant contortions, and in proportion as any one diſtinguiſhed himſelf this way, he was applauded with great ſhouts. After they had thus paid their firſt homage to the idols, they all danced in a very confuſed manner, to the ſound of the drum and chichicoué; and during this the jugglers pretended to bewitch or charm ſeveral Indians, who

ſeemed

ſeemed to be expiring under the power of their incantations: afterwards, by applying a certain powder to their lips, they reſtored them to life.

When this farce had laſted ſome time, he who preſided at the feaſt, having two men and two women near him, run over all the cabbins, to intimate that the ſacrifices were going to begin. On meeting any one in his way, he reſted both hands on his head, and the other embraced his knees. The victims were to be dogs, and the cries of theſe animals, which were howling, and of the Indians who howled as if to anſwer them, with all their might were heard on all ſides. When the viands were ready, they were offered to the pagods, they were afterwards eaten, and the bones were burnt. Mean time the juggler continued to reſtore the dead to life, and the whole concluded with diſtributing to theſe quacks a portion of whatever was moſt to their fancy in the whole town.

From the time of their coming to the reſolution of making war, to the departure of the warriors, the nights are ſpent in ſinging, and the days in making the neceſſary preparations. They depute warriors to ſing the war ſong amongſt their neighbours and allies, whom they often take care to diſpoſe to their deſires before hand, and by ſecret negociations. If their rout is by water, they build or repair their canoes; if it happen to be in the winter ſeaſon, they provide themſelves in ſledges and ſnow ſhoes. Theſe ſnow ſhoes, which are abſolutely neceſſary for walking in the ſnow, are about three feet long, and from fifteen to ſixteen inches in their extreme width. They are of an oval ſhape, except that the hind part terminates in a point; there are ſmall bits of wood placed croſs wiſe five or ſix inches from

from either end, which ſerve to ſtrengthen them, and that on the fore part is as it were the ſtring of a bow, under an opening in which the foot is inſerted, and made faſt with thongs. The tiſſue or covering of the ſnow ſhoe is made of ſtraps of leather two fingers broad, and the border is of a light wood hardened in the fire. To walk well on theſe ſhoes, you muſt turn your knees inwards, keeping your legs at a good diſtance from each other. It is very difficult to accuſtom one's ſelf to them; but when once you attain it, you walk eaſily and without fatiguing yourſelf any more than if you had nothing on your feet. It is impoſſible to make uſe of theſe ſnow ſhoes with common ſhoes. One muſt wear thoſe of the Indians, which are a kind of ſacks made of dried hides, folded over the extremity of the foot, and tied with cords.

Their ſledges, which ſerve to tranſport the baggage, and in caſe of neceſſity the ſick and wounded, are two ſmall and very thin boards half a foot broad each, and ſix or ſeven long. The fore part is ſomewhat raiſed, and the ſides bordered with ſmall bands, to which the thongs for binding whatever is laid upon the carriage, is faſtened. Let theſe carriages be ever ſo much loaded, an Indian draws it without difficulty, by means of a long thong or ſtrap, which is paſs'd round his breaſt, and is called a collar. They uſe them likewiſe for carrying burdens, and mothers for carrying their children with their cradles; but in this caſe the thong or collar is placed upon their forehead, and not on their breaſts.

Every thing being ready, and the day of their departure come, they take their leave with great demonſtrations of real affection. Every one is deſirous

ſirous of having ſomething the warriors have been in uſe to wear or carry about them, and gives them in return pledges of their friendſhip, and aſſurances of an everlaſting remembrance of them. They ſcarce ever enter any of their cabins without carrying away their robe, in order to give them a better, or at leaſt one full as good in its ſtead. Laſtly, they all repair to the chief. They find him armed as on the firſt day of his addreſſing himſelf to them, and as he has appeared in publick ever ſince. They again have their faces painted, every one after his own fancy or caprice, and all of them generally ſo as to ſtrike terror. The chief makes them a ſhort harangue: afterwards he comes out of his cabin ſinging the death ſong. They all follow him in file, or one after another, obſerving a profound ſilence; and the ſame thing is repeated every morning when they begin their march. Here the women lead the van with their proviſions; and when the warriors have joined them, they deliver to them all their baggage, and remain almoſt naked; at leaſt as much ſo as the ſeaſon will allow.

Formerly the arms of the Indians were the bow and arrow, and a kind of javelin, both pointed with a kind of bone worked in different manners; and laſtly, the hatchet or break-head. This was formerly a ſhort club of a very hard wood, the head of which was partly round, and partly ſharp edged. Moſt had no defenſive weapon; but when they attacked any entrenchment, they covered their whole body with ſmall light boards. Some have a ſort of cuiraſs, or breaſt plate, of ſmall pliable rings very neatly worked. They had even formerly a kind of mail for the arms and thighs made of the ſame materials. But as this kind of armour was found not to be proof againſt fire arms, they have renounced

them, without putting any thing in their place The weſtern Indians always uſe bucklers of buffaloes hide, which are very light, and proof againſt muſket-ſhot. It is pretty ſurpriſing, the other Indian nations never uſe them.

When they uſe our ſwords, which is very rare, they handle them like our half pike: but when they can have fire arms, powder and ſhot, they abandon their bows, and are excellent markſmen. We have no cauſe to repent having given them theſe arms, tho' we were not the firſt to do it. The Iroquois had got them of the Dutch, who were then in poſſeſſion of New-York; which laid us under the neceſſity of giving them to our allies. They have a kind of ſtandards or colours to know one another by, and to enable them to rally; theſe are ſmall pieces of bark cut into a round form, which they fix to the head of a pole, and on which is drawn the mark of their nation or village. If the party is numerous, each family or tribe has its peculiar enſign with its diſtinguiſhing mark. Their arms are alſo adorned with different figures, and ſometimes with the mark of the chief.

But that which they are as careful not to forget, as even their arms, and which they guard with ſtill more care, is their manitous. I ſhall treat more particularly of them elſewhere; it ſuffices here to ſay, that they are ſo many ſymbols, under which every one repreſents his tutelar genius. They incloſe them all in a bag made of ruſhes, and painted with different colours; and often to do honour to the chief, they place this bag in the prow of his canoe. If there are too many manitous to be contained in one bag, they diſtribute them amongſt ſeveral bags, which are entruſted to the care of the lieutenant

lieutenant and of the elders of each family. To theſe they join the preſents which have been made them in order to obtain priſoners, together with the tongues of all the animals killed during the campaign, and which are to be ſacrificed to the genii at their return.

In their marches by land, the chief carries his own bag called his matraſs, but may diſcharge this burden on any one at pleaſure, and need not fear being refuſed, this being looked upon as an honour done the perſon to whom it is given: this is alſo a ſort of right of ſurvivorſhip to the command in caſe the chief and his lieutenant ſhould happen to die in the campaign. But whilſt I write you, behold me arrived in the river Niagara, where I ſhall meet with agreeable company, and remain ſome days. I ſet out from Riviere des Sables, the 21ſt before ſun riſe, but the wind proving always contrary, we were obliged at ten o'clock to enter the bay of the Tſonnonthouans. At half way between this bay and Riviere des Sables, there is a ſmall river which I would not have failed to viſit, had I been ſooner informed of what it has that is ſingular, which I learnt juſt after my arrival here.

This river is called Caſconchiagon, and is very narrow, and ſhallow at its diſcharge into the lake. A little higher it is 240 feet in breadth, and it is affirmed that there is water to float the largeſt ſhips. Two leagues from its mouth you are ſtopped by a fall, which ſeems to be about ſixty feet high, and 240 feet broad; a muſket-ſhot above this, you find a ſecond of the ſame breadth, but not ſo high by a third: and half a league higher ſtill a third, which is full a hundred feet high, and 360 feet broad. You meet after this with ſeveral rapids,

and after ſailing fifty leagues higher, you diſcover a fourth fall, nothing inferior to the third. The courſe of this river is an hundred leagues, and after you have ſailed up ſixty leagues on it, you have no more than ten to make over land, turning towards the right, to arrive at the Ohio, otherwiſe, *la Belle Riviere.* The place where you arrive at is called Ganos, where, an officer worthy of credit, and from whom I have received all I have been relating to you, aſſures me he ſaw a fountain, the water of which reſembles oil, and has the taſte of iron. He added, that a little farther there is another exactly of the ſame kind, and that the Indians make uſe of its water to mitigate all kinds of pains.

The bay of the Tſonnonthouans is a delightful place: here is a fine river which meanders between two beautiful meadows ſkirted with hills, between which you diſcover vallies which ſtretch a great way, the whole forming the nobleſt proſpect in the whole world, and is ſurrounded with a magnificent foreſt of the talleſt and largeſt timber trees: but the ſoil ſeemed to me a little light and ſandy. We ſet out again at half an hour paſt one, and continued our voyage till ten at night. Our deſign was to take up our night's lodgings within a ſmall river called Buffaloe's river; but we found the entry ſhut up with ſand banks, which often happens to ſmall rivers which diſcharge themſelves into theſe lakes, by reaſon of their carrying a great quantity of ſand along with them: for when the wind blows directly towards their mouths, the ſand is ſtopped by the waves, and gradually forms a dike, ſo high and ſtrong that the current of the rivers cannot force a paſſage thro' it, except at ſuch times as they are ſwoln by the melting of the ſnow.

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I was obliged to paſs the reſt of the night in my canoe, where I was expoſed to a very hard froſt. Thus the trees were ſcarce obſerved to bud, but were all in the ſame ſtate as in the middle of winter. We ſet out thence at half an hour paſt three in the morning of the 22d, being aſcenſion day, and went to ſay maſs at nine o'clock, at what is called *le Grand Marais*. This is much ſuch another place as that of the Tſonnonthouans, but the lands ſeem better. Towards two o'clock in the afternoon, we entered the river of *Niagara* formed by the great fall, whereof I ſhall ſpeak preſently, or rather it is the river St. Lawrence, which proceeds from lake Eriè, and paſſes thro' lake Ontario after fourteen leagues of Narrows. It is called the river Niagara from the fall being a courſe of ſix leagues. After ſailing three leagues, you find on the left ſome cabins of the Iroquois, Tſonnonthouans, and of the Miſſiſagues as at Catarocoui. The Sieur de Joncaire, lieutenant of our troops, has alſo a cabbin at this place, to which they have before hand given the name of Fort * : for it is pretended that in time this will be changed into a great fortreſs.

I found here ſeveral officers, who were to return in a few days to Quebec. For this reaſon I am obliged to cloſe my letter, which I ſhall ſend by that way. As for my own part, I foreſee I ſhall have time ſufficient to write you another after they are gone, and the place itſelf will in a great meaſure furniſh me materials enough to fill it, together with

* A fort has been ſince built in the mouth of the river of Niagara on the ſame ſide, and exactly at the place where Monſ. de Denonville had built one, which ſubſiſted not long. There even begins to be formed here a French town.

what I shall be able to learn of the officer I have mentioned.

*I have the honour to be*, &c.

*Niagara, May* 23, 1721.

LETTER

# LETTER XV.

*Tranſactions between the* Tſonnonthouans *(a tribe of the* Iroquois) *and the* Engliſh, *on occaſion of building a* French *fort at* Niagara. *Deſcription of the country. Fire-dance; ſtory on this occaſion. Deſcription of the Fall of* Niagara.

*From the Fall of Niagara, May* 14, 1721.

*Madam,*

I Have already had the honour to acquaint you, that we have a ſcheme for a ſettlement in this place; but in order to know the reaſon of this project, it will be proper to obſerve, that as the Engliſh pretend, by virtue of the treaty of Utrecht, to the ſovereignty of all the Iroquoiſe country, and by conſequence, to be bounded on that ſide, by Lake Ontario only; now it is evident, that, in caſe we allow of their pretenſions, they would then have it abſolutely in their power to eſtabliſh themſelves firmly in the heart of the French colonies, or at leaſt, entirely to ruin their commerce. In order, therefore, to prevent this evil, it has been judged proper, without, however, violating the treaty, to

make a ſettlement in ſome place, which might ſecure to us the free communication between the lakes, and where the Engliſh ſhould not have it in their power to oppoſe us. A commiſſion has therefore been given to M. de Joncaire, who having in his youth been priſoner amongſt the Tſonnonthouans, ſo inſinuated himſelf into the good graces of thoſe Indians, that they adopted him, ſo that even in the hotteſt of their wars with us, and notwithſtanding his remarkable ſervices to his country, he has always enjoyed the privileges of that adoption.

On receiving the orders I have been now mentioning to you, he repaired to them, aſſembled their chiefs, and after having aſſured them, that his greateſt pleaſure in this world would be to live amongſt his brethren; he added, that he would much oftener viſit them, had he a cabin amongſt them, to which he might retire when he had a mind to be private. They told him, that they had always looked upon him as one of their own children, that he had only to make choice of a place to his liking in any part of the country. He aſked no more, but went immediately, and made choice of a ſpot on the banks of the river, which terminates the canton of Tſonnonthouan, where he built his cabbin. The news of this ſoon reached New-York, where it excited ſo much the more the jealouſy of the Engliſh, as that nation had never been able to obtain the favour granted to the Sieur de Joncaire, in any Iroquoiſe canton.

They made loud remonſtrances, which being ſeconded with preſents, the other four cantons at once eſpouſed their intereſts. They were, however, never the nearer their point, as the cantons are not only independant of each other, but alſo very jea-

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lous of this independance. It was therefore neceſſary to gain that of Tſonnonthouan, and the Engliſh omitted nothing to accompliſh it; but they were ſoon ſenſible they ſhould never be able to get Joncaire diſmiſſed from Niagara. At laſt they contented themſelves with demanding, that, at leaſt, they might be permitted to have a cabin in the ſame place; but this was likewiſe refuſed them. "Our country is in peace, ſaid the Tſonnonthouans, the French and you will never be able to live together, without raiſing diſturbances. Moreover, added they, it is of no conſequence that Joncaire ſhould remain here; he is a child of the nation, he enjoys his right which we are not at liberty to take from him."

Now, Madam, we muſt acknowledge, that nothing but zeal for the publick good could poſſibly induce an officer to remain in ſuch a country as this, than which a wilder and more frightful is not to be ſeen. On the one ſide you ſee juſt under your feet, and as it were at the bottom of an abyſs, a great river, but which in this place is liker a torrent by its rapidity, by the whirlpools formed by a thouſand rocks, through which it with difficulty finds a paſſage, and by the foam with which it is always covered; on the other the view is confined by three mountains placed one over the other, and whereof the laſt hides itſelf in the clouds. This would have been a very proper ſcene for the poets to make the Titans attempt to ſcale the heavens. In a word, on whatever ſide you turn your eyes, you diſcover nothing which does not inſpire a ſecret horror.

You have, however, but a very ſhort way to go, to behold a very different proſpect. Behind thoſe uncultivated and uninhabitable mountains, you enjoy

joy the ſight of a rich country, magnificent foreſts, beautiful and fruitful hills; you breathe the pureſt air, under the mildeſt and moſt temperate climate imaginable, ſituated between two lakes the leaſt of which * is two hundred and fifty leagues in circuit.

It is my opinion that had we the precaution to make ſure of a place of this conſequence, by a good fortreſs, and by a tolerable colony, all the forces of the Iroquoiſe and Engliſh conjoined, would not have been able, at this time to drive us out of it, and that we ourſelves would have been in a condition to give law to the former, and to hinder moſt part of the Indians from carrying their furs to the ſecond, as they daily do with impunity. The company I found here with M. de Joncaire, was compoſed of the baron de Longueil, king's lieutenant in Montreal †, the marquis de Cavagnal, ſon of the marquis de Vaudreuil, the preſent governor of New-France; M. de Senneville, captain, and the Sieur de la Chauvignerie, enſign, and interpreter of the Iroquoiſe language. Theſe gentlemen are about negotiating an agreement of differences with the canton of Onontagué, and were ordered to viſit the ſettlement of the Sieur de Joncaire, with which they were extremely well ſatisfied. The Tſonnonthouans renewed to them the promiſe they had formerly made them, to maintain it. This was done in a council, in which Joncaire, as they told me, ſpoke with all the good ſenſe of a Frenchman, whereof he enjoys a large ſhare, and with the ſublimeſt eloquence of an Iroquoiſe.

* Lake Ontario. Lake Erie is three hundred leagues round.

† He died governor of this city.

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On the eve of their departure, that is, on the 29th, a Miſſiſuague regaled us with a feſtival, which has ſomething in it ſingular enough. It was quite dark when it began, and on entering the cabin of this Indian, we found a fire lighted, near which ſat a man beating on a kind of drum; another was conſtantly ſhaking his *Chichicoué*, and ſinging at the ſame time. This laſted two hours, and tired us very much as they were always repeating the ſame thing over again, or rather uttering half articulated ſounds, and that without the leaſt variation. We entreated our hoſt not to carry this prelude any further, who with a good deal of difficulty ſhewed us this mark of complaiſance.

Next, five or ſix women made their appearance, drawing up in a line, in very cloſe order, their arms hanging down, and dancing and ſinging at the ſame time, that is to ſay, they moved ſome paces forwards, and then as many backwards, without breaking the rank. When they had continued this exerciſe about a quarter of an hour, the fire, which was all that gave light in the cabbin, was put out, and then nothing was to be perceived but an Indian dancing with a lighted coal in his mouth. The concert of the drum and chichicoué ſtill continued, the women repeated their dances and ſinging from time to time; the Indian danced all the while, but as he could only be diſtinguiſhed by the light of the coal in his mouth he appeared like a goblin, and was horrible to ſee. This medley of dancing, and ſinging, and inſtruments, and that fire which never went out, had a very wild and whimſical appearance, and diverted us for half an hour; after which we went out of the cabin, though the entertainment laſted till morning. This Madam is all I ſaw of the fire-dance, and I have not been able to learn what

paſſed

paſſed the remainder of the night. The muſick, which I heard for ſome time after, was a great deal more ſupportable at a diſtance than when near it. The contraſt of male and female voices at a certain diſtance had a pleaſant effect enough; and if the Indian women were taught muſick, I am confident they would make very agreeable ſingers.

I was very deſirous to know how a man was able to hold a lighted coal in his mouth ſo long, without being burnt, and without its going out; but all I have been able to learn of this point is, that the Indians are acquainted with a plant which renders the part that has been rubbed with it inſenſible to fire, but whereof they would never communicate the diſcovery to the Europeans. We know that the onion and garlick will produce the ſame effect, though for a very ſhort while*. Beſides, how could this coal remain ſo long lighted? be this as it will, I remember to have read in the letters of one of our ancient miſſionaries of Canada, a thing that has ſome relation to this, and which he learned from another miſſionary who was an eye-witneſs. This perſon ſhewed him one day a ſtone, which one of their juglers or quacks had thrown into the fire in his preſence, leaving it there till it became red hot; after which falling into a ſort of enthuſiaſtick frenzy, he took it between his teeth, and carrying it always in that manner, went to viſit a patient, the miſſionary following him; as he caſt the ſtone upon the ground, the father on taking it up, perceived the marks of the Indian's teeth in it, but yet could not obſerve the leaſt ſign of burning in his mouth. He does not mention what the quack

* It is pretended that the leaves of the anemoné of Canada, in other reſpects very cauſtick, have this virtue.

did

did afterwards for the relief of the patient; but here is another incident of the ſame kind, and proceeding from the ſame ſource, and of which your Grace will judge as you think proper.

A Huron woman, after having had a viſion, true or falſe, was ſeized with a giddineſs, and an almoſt univerſal contraction of the nerves. As this woman from the beginning of the diſorder, never ſlept without having many troubleſome dreams, ſhe began to ſuſpect ſomething preternatural in it, and took it into her head, ſhe ſhould be cured by means of a feaſt whereof ſhe herſelf regulated all the ceremonies, according to what ſhe ſaid, ſhe remembered to have ſeen formerly practiſed. Firſt, ſhe would have them carry her to the village where ſhe was born, the elders whom ſhe cauſed to be advertized of her deſign exhorting all the people to accompany her. In a moment's time her cabin was crowded with people, who came to offer her their ſervice. She accepted them, inſtructed them in what they were to do, and immediately the ſtouteſt of them placed her in a kind of litter, and carried her by turns, ſinging with all their might.

When they were come near the village, they aſſembled a great council to which the miſſionaries were invited by way of compliment, who did all in their power, but ineffectually, to diſſuade them from a thing, in which they juſtly ſuſpected equal folly and ſuperſtition. They calmly heard all they had to ſay on this ſubject, but when they had done ſpeaking, one of the chiefs of the council, undertook to refute their arguments, but with no better ſucceſs. Then leaving the miſſionaries where he found them, he exhorted all the aſſiſtants to acquit themſelves exactly of what ſhould be preſcribed them,

them, and to maintain the ancient cuſtoms. Whilſt he was ſtill ſpeaking, two deputies from the patient entered the aſſembly, and requeſted on her behalf, to have ſent her two young boys and two young girls, attired in robes and belts of Wampum, with certain preſents, which ſhe mentioned, adding, that ſhe would make known her further intentions to theſe four perſons.

This was immediately put in execution, a ſhort while afterwards, the four young perſons returned, empty handed, and almoſt naked, the patient having ſtript them of all they had, even to their very robes. In this condition they entered the council which was ſtill aſſembled, and ſet forth the demands of this woman, conſiſting of two and twenty articles, amongſt which one was a blue covering, to be furniſhed by the miſſionaries, and all of them to be delivered within an hour. They tried all their rhetorick to obtain the covering, but this being peremptorily refuſed, they were obliged to go without it. As ſoon as the ſick perſon received the other preſents, ſhe entered the village, being carried, as I have already ſaid, all the way. Towards evening, a publick crier, by her order, made proclamation, to have fires lighted in every cabbin, ſhe being to viſit them all, which accordingly ſhe did as ſoon as the ſun was ſet, being ſupported by two men, and followed by the whole village. She paſſed through the middle of all the fires, her feet and legs naked, without receiving any harm, whilſt her two ſupporters, though they did their utmoſt endeavours to keep clear of being ſcorched ſuffered greatly, as they were obliged to conduct her in this manner acroſs upwards of three hundred fires: as for her part, her conſtant complaint was of the cold;

cold; at the end of this courſe, ſhe declared ſhe felt herſelf better.

On the morrow, at ſunriſe, they began, and by her order too, a kind of Bacchanalian feſtival, which laſted three days. On the firſt, all the people run through the cabins, breaking and overturning every thing, and, in proportion as the noiſe and hubbub encreaſed, the patient declared that her pains diminiſhed. The other two days were ſpent in running over all the fires through which ſhe had paſſed, propoſing her deſires in ænigmatical terms, which they were obliged to divine, and to perform accordingly, that inſtant; ſome of theſe were obſcene even to a horrible degree. The fourth day, the ſick perſon made, a ſecond time, the tour of all the cabbins, but in a very different manner from the firſt. She was placed in the midſt of two troops of Indians, marching one after another, with a ſad and languiſhing air, and obſerving a profound ſilence. No perſon was ſuffered to be in her way, and thoſe who formed the vanguard of her eſcort, cleared the road of all they met. As ſoon as ſhe entered any cabin they made her ſit down, and placed themſelves round her; ſhe ſighed, related with a moving accent, all her evils, and gave to underſtand that her being perfectly cured, depended on the accompliſhment of ſome wiſh, which ſhe kept to herſelf, and which muſt be divined. Every one did his beſt to interpret it, but this deſire was very complex, and conſiſted of a great number of particulars, ſo that in proportion as they hit upon one of them, they were obliged to give her what ſhe ſought for, ſhe ſcarce ever left any cabbin, till ſhe had got all it contained.

When ſhe ſaw them at a loſs to gueſs her meaning, ſhe expreſſed herſelf ſomewhat more clearly, and when they had gueſſed all, ſhe cauſed every thing to be reſtored. There was no longer any doubt of her being perfectly cured, and a feſtival was made on the occaſion, which conſiſted in cries, or rather, hideous howlings, and all manner of extravagancies. Laſtly, ſhe paid her acknowledgments, and, the better to teſtify her gratitude, ſhe viſited all the cabbins a third time, but without any ceremony. The miſſionary, who was witneſs to this ridiculous ſcene, ſays, that the ſick perſon was not entirely cured, but that ſhe was, however, a great deal better, though the moſt healthy and robuſt perſon would have died under ſuch an operation. The father was at great pains to cauſe her take notice, that her pretended genius or familiar, had promiſed her a perfect cure, but had failed of his promiſe. He was anſwered, that amongſt ſuch a number of things as were to be done, it was hardly poſſible ſomething ſhould not have been omitted. He expected they would have chiefly inſiſted on the refuſal of the blue covering; it is true they made no mention of it, only they ſaid, that after this refuſal, the genius had appeared to the patient, and aſſured her that this refuſal ſhould do her no prejudice, becauſe, the French not being natives of the country, the genii had no power over them. I return to my voyage.

The officers having departed, I aſcended thoſe frightful mountains, in order to viſit the famous Fall of Niagara, above which I was to take water; this is a journey of three leagues, though formerly five; becauſe the way then lay by the other, that is, the weſt-ſide of the river, and alſo becauſe the place for embarking lay full two leagues above the Fall.

Fall. But there has ſince been found, on the left, at the diſtance of half a quarter of a league from this cataract, a creek, where the current is not perceivable, and conſequently a place where one may take water without danger. My firſt care, after my arrival, was to viſit the nobleſt caſcade perhaps in the world; but I preſently found the baron de la Hontan had committed ſuch a miſtake with reſpect to its height and figure, as to give grounds to believe he had never ſeen it. It is certain, that if you meaſure its height by that of the three mountains, you are obliged to climb to get at it, it does not come much ſhort of what the map of M. Deſliſle makes it; that is, ſix hundred feet, having certainly gone into this paradox, either, on the faith of the baron de la Hontan or father Hennepin; but after I arrived at the ſummit of the third mountain, I obſerved, that in the ſpace of three leagues, which I had to walk before I came to this piece of water, though you are ſometimes obliged to aſcend, you muſt yet deſcend ſtill more, a circumſtance to which travellers ſeem not to have ſufficiently attended. As it is impoſſible to approach it but on one ſide only, and conſequently to ſee it, excepting in profil, or ſideways; it is no eaſy matter to meaſure its height with inſtruments. It, has, however, been attempted by means of a pole tied to a long line, and after many repeated trials, it has been found only one hundred and fifteen, or one hundred and twenty feet high. But it is impoſſible to be ſure that the pole has not been ſtopt by ſome projecting rock; for though it was always drawn up wet, as well as the end of the line to which it was tied, this proves nothing at all, as the water which precipitates itſelf from the mountain, riſes very high in foam. For my own part, after having

examined it on all ſides, where it could be viewed to the greateſt advantage, I am inclined to think we cannot allow it leſs than a hundred and forty, or fifty feet.

As to its figure, it is in the ſhape of a horſe-ſhoe, and is about four hundred paces in circumference; it is divided into two, exactly in the middle, by a very narrow iſland, half a quarter of a league long. It is true, thoſe two parts very ſoon unite; that on my ſide, and which I could only have a ſide view of, has ſeveral branches which project from the body of the caſcade, but that which I viewed in front, appeared to me quite entire. The baron de la Hontan mentions a torrent, which if this author has not invented it, muſt certainly fall through ſome channel on the melting of the ſnows.

You may eaſily gueſs, Madam, that a great way below this Fall, the river ſtill retains ſtrong marks of ſo violent a ſhock; accordingly, it becomes only navigable three leagues below, and exactly at the place which M. de Joncaire has choſen for his reſidence. It ſhould by right be equally unnavigable above it, ſince the river falls perpendicular the whole ſpace of its breadth. But beſides the iſland, which divides it into two, ſeveral rocks which are ſcattered up and down above it, abate much of the rapidity of the ſtream; it is notwithſtanding ſo very ſtrong, that ten or twelve Outaways trying to croſs over to the iſland to ſhun the Iroquoiſe who were in purſuit of them, were drawn into the precipice, in ſpite of all their efforts to preſerve themſelves.

I have

I have heard ſay that the fiſh that happen to be entangled in the current, fall dead into the river, and that the Indians of thoſe parts were conſiderably advantaged by them; but I ſaw nothing of this ſort. I was alſo told, that the birds that attempted to fly over were ſometimes caught in the whirlwind formed, by the violence of the torrent. But I obſerved quite the contrary, for I ſaw ſmall birds flying very low, and exactly over the Fall, which yet cleared their paſſage very well.

This ſheet of water falls upon a rock, and there are two reaſons which induce me to believe, that it has either found, or perhaps in time hollowed out a cavern of conſiderable depth. The firſt is, that the noiſe it makes is very hollow, reſembling that of thunder at a diſtance. You can ſcarce hear it at M. de Joncaire's, and what you hear in this place, may poſſibly be only that of the whirlpools cauſed by the rocks, which fill the bed of the river as far as this. And ſo much the rather as above the cataract, you do not hear it near ſo far. The ſecond is, that nothing has ever been ſeen again that has once fallen over it, not even the wrecks of the canoe of the Outaways, I mentioned juſt now. Be this as it will, Ovid gives us the deſcription of ſuch another cataract ſituated according to him in the delightful valley of Tempe. I will not pretend that the country of Niagara is as fine as that, though I believe its cataract much the nobleſt of the two *.

* Eſt nemus Hæmoniæ, prærupta quod undique claudit
Sylva, vocant Tempe, per quæ Peneus ab imo
Effuſus Pindo ſpumoſis volvitur undis.
Dejectiſque gravi tenues agitantia fumos
Nubila conducit, ſummiſque aſpergine ſylvas
Impluit, et ſonitis pluſquam vicina fatigat. MET. Liv. 1.

Beſides I perceived no miſt above it, but from behind, at a diſtance, one would take it for ſmoke, and there is no perſon who would not be deceived with it, if he came in ſight of the iſle, without having been told before-hand that there was ſo ſurpriſing a cataract in this place.

The ſoil of the three leagues I had to walk a foot to get hither, and which is called the carrying-place of Niagara, ſeems very indifferent; it is even very ill-wooded, and you cannot walk ten paces without treading on ant-hills, or meeting with rattle-ſnakes, eſpecially during the heat of the day. I think, I told you, Madam, that the Indians eſteem the fleſh of thoſe reptiles a very great dainty. In general, ſerpents are no way frightful to theſe people; there is no animal you ſee oftener painted on their faces and bodies, and they ſeldom ever purſue them, except for food. The bones and ſkins of ſerpents are alſo of great ſervice to their jugglers and wizards in divining; the laſt of which they make uſe of for belts and fillets. It is no leſs true what we are told of their having the ſecret of enchanting, or, to ſpeak more properly, ſtupifying thoſe animals; their taking them alive, handling them, and putting them in their boſom, without receiving any hurt; a circumſtance, which contributes not a little towards gaining them the great credit they have amongſt theſe people.

I was going to ſeal this letter, when my people came to tell me, we ſhould not ſet out to-morrow as I expected. So I muſt wait with patience, and profit what I can of my ſpare time. I am therefore going to reſume the article of the wars of the Indians, which will not be ſo ſoon exhauſted. The

moment all the warriors are embarked, the canoes ſail to a little diſtance, keeping cloſe together in one line; then the chief riſes, holding in his hand his chichicouè, and ſings aloud his own war-ſong, to which his ſoldiers made anſwer by a treble *hé!* fetched from the bottom of their breaſts. The elders and chiefs of the council who have remained on the banks, then exhort the warriors to do their duty, and above all to beware of being ſurpriſed. This is, of all the advices which can be given an Indian, the moſt neceſſary, and that, by which they generally profit leaſt. This admonition, however, interrupts not the chief who continues to ſing all the while. Laſtly, the warriours conjure their relations and friends, to remember them continually, and then raiſing the moſt horrid ſhouts or howlings all together, they immediately ſet out with ſo much celerity, that they are inſtantly out of ſight.

The Hurons and Iroquois make no uſe of the chichicouè, but give them to their priſoners, ſo that this which with other Indians is a warlike inſtrument, ſeems with them a mark or badge of ſlavery. The warriors never make ſhort marches, eſpecially when in large bodies; moreover, they conſtrue every thing that happens into an omen, and the jugglers, whoſe function it is to explain them, haſten or retard their marches at pleaſure Whilſt they are in a country where they have no ſuſpicion of an enemy, they uſe no manner of precaution, and ſometimes there are ſcarce half a dozen warriors together, the reſt being diſperſed up and down a hunting. But let them be at ever ſo great a diſtance from the rout, they are ſure to be at the place of rendezvous at the hour appointed.

They pitch their camp long before ſun-ſet, and commonly leave in the front of it a large ſpace, incloſed with a palliſade, or rather a kind of lattice-work, on which are placed their manitous, turned towards that ſide on which their rout lies. They invoke them for the ſpace of an hour, and the ſame thing is done every morning before they ſet out. This being done, they imagine they have nothing to fear, being perſuaded that the genii take upon themſelves the office of centinels, and the whole army ſleeps ſecurely under their ſafeguard. No experience is able to undeceive theſe barbarians, or to draw them out of their preſumptuous confidence. This has its ſource in an indolence and lazineſs which nothing is able to overcome.

Every thing in the way of the warriors is held as an enemy. In caſe, however, they ſhould happen to meet with their allies, or parties of near the ſame force with whom they no have quarrel, they enter in a league of mutual friendſhip. If the allies they meet are at war with the ſame enemy, the chief of the ſtrongeſt party, or of that which has firſt taken up arms, gives the other a preſent of ſcalps, of which they never fail to make proviſion for ſuch occaſions; and tells him, *You alſo have a blow here*; that is, you have fulfilled your engagements, your honour is now ſecure, and you are at liberty to return; but this is to be underſtood when the rencounter is accidental, and that no word or promiſe has paſſed betwixt them, or that they have no need of a reinforcement.

When they are on the point of entering the enemy's country, they halt to perform a very extraordinary ceremony. In the evening there is a great feaſt

feaſt, after which they go to ſleep As ſoon as all are awake, thoſe who have had any dreams go from tent to tent, or rather from fire to fire, ſinging their death-ſong, in which they inſert their dreams in an enigmatical manner. Every one ſets his brains to work to interpret them, and ſhould no one be able to ſucceed in it, the dreamers are free to return home. A notable opportunity for cowards truly. Afterwards new invocations are made to the genii, and they animate themſelves anew to acquit themſelves nobly, and to perform wonders; they ſwear to aid each other mutually; laſtly, they begin their march, and in caſe they have come thus far in canoes, they take a great care to conceal them. If every thing were exactly done, which is preſcribed on ſuch occaſions, it would be very difficult to ſurpriſe an Indian party in an enemy's country. There muſt no more fires be lighted, no more ſhouting, and no more hunting; they are not even to ſpeak but by ſigns; but theſe laws are ill-obſerved. The Indians are naturally preſumptuous, and the leaſt capable of confinement of any people in the world. They neglect not, however, to ſend out ſcouts every evening, who employ two or three hours in excurſions on different ſides. If theſe diſcover nothing, they ſleep ſecurely, and once more abandon their camp to the ſafeguard of their manitous.

As ſoon as they have diſcovered an enemy, they ſend to reconnoitre him, and on the report of thoſe ſent out, hold a council. The attack is generally made at day-break. This is the time they ſuppoſe the enemy to be in the deepeſt ſleep, and they keep themſelves the whole night laid flat upon their faces, without ſtirring. They make their approaches in the ſame manner, creeping upon hands and feet, till they

have got within a bow-ſhot of the enemy. Then they all ſtart up, the chief gives the ſignal by a ſmall cry, to which the whole body makes anſwer by hideous howlings, and at the ſame time make their diſcharge. Then without giving them time to recover from their confuſion they pour upon them with hatchet in hand. Since the Indian have ſubſtituted iron hatchets to their old wooden ones, their battles have become more bloody. The combat ended, they ſcalp the dead and dying, and never think of making priſoners, till all reſiſtance is over.

But when they find the enemy on his guard, or too ſtrongly intrenched they retire, provided they have ſtill time to do it. If not, they boldly reſolve on fighting to the laſt drop, and there is ſometimes abundance of blood-ſhed on both ſides. A camp which has been forced is the very picture of fury itſelf, the barbarous fierceneſs of the conquerors, the deſpair of the conquered, who know what they have to expect ſhould they fall alive into the hands of the enemy, occaſion prodigious efforts on both ſides, which ſurpaſs all that can be related of them. The figure of the combatants all beſmeared with black and red, ſtill augments the horror of the conflict, and a very good picture of hell might be drawn from this model. When the victory is no longer doubtful, the conquerors firſt diſpatch all ſuch as they deſpair of being able to carry with them, without trouble, and then try only to tire the reſt whom they are deſirous of making priſoners.

The Indians are naturally intrepid, and in ſpite of their brutal fierceneſs always retain abundance of cold

cold blood in the midſt of action; yet they never engage in an open country when they can avoid it; their reaſon for it being, ſay they, that a victory bought with blood is no victory, and that the glory of a chief conſiſts above all things in bringing back all his people ſafe and ſound, or in whole ſkins. I have heard ſay, that when two enemies who are acquaintances meet in battle, they hold dialogues together like the ſpeeches of former heroes. I do not believe this happens in the heat of the action, but it may very well happen in ſmall rencounters, or before paſſing ſome rivulet, or facing an entrenchment, in which caſe they bid one another defiance, or recall to memory what may have paſſed in ſome former action.

War is almoſt always made by ſurprize, which generally ſucceeds well enough For if the Indians are negligent in guarding againſt ſurprizes, they are equally alert and dextrous in ſurpriſing their enemies. Beſides, theſe people have a natural and a moſt admirable talent, or I might call it an inſtinct, to know whether they have paſſed any particular way. On the ſmootheſt graſs, or the hardeſt earth, even on the very ſtones, they will diſcover the traces of an enemy, and by their ſhape and figure of the footſteps, and the diſtance between their prints, they will, it is ſaid, diſtinguiſh not only different nations, but alſo tell whether they were men or women who have gone that way. I was long of opinion that what I had been told of them was much exaggerated, but the uniform voices of all who have lived and converſed much with Indians, leave me no room to queſtion the truth of them. If there are any of the priſoners wounded in ſuch manner as that they cannot be tranſported, they immediately

ly burn them, and this is done in their firſt tranſports of rage, and as they are often obliged to make a haſty retreat, they generally come off cheaper than thoſe they reſerve for a ſlower puniſhment.

It is cuſtomary among ſome nations, for the chief of the victorious party to leave his hatchet upon the field of battle, on which he takes care to trace the mark of his nation, that of his family, together with his own portrait, that is, an oval, with all the figures he wears on his viſage repreſented within it. Others paint all theſe marks on the trunk of a tree, or on a piece of bark, with charcoal duſt mixed with ſome other colours. They alſo add hieroglyphick characters by means of which paſſengers may inform themſelves of the minuteſt circumſtances, not only of the action but of the whole campaign. The chief of the party may be known by the marks above-mentioned; the number of his exploits by ſo many matraſſes; the number of his ſoldiers by ſo many lines; that of the priſoners by ſo many ſmall figures carrying ſtaves, or chichicoués; that of the killed by ſo many human figures without heads, with ſuch different marks as ſerve to diſtinguiſh men grown from women and children. But this is not always found very near the place of action, for when a party is in fear of being purſued, they place them at a diſtance from their route, in order to deceive their purſuers.

Till ſuch time as they reach a country where they may be in ſafety, they make abundance of diſpatch, and that the wounded may not retard their flight, they carry them by turns on litters, or draw them on

on ſledges if it is in the winter-ſeaſon. On entering their canoes, they make their priſoners ſing, which is alſo done as often as they meet with any of their allies. This honour coſts thoſe who receive it a feaſt, and ſomething ſtill worſe than the trouble of ſinging to the wretched captives. They invite their allies to *careſs* them; now to careſs a priſoner is to do him all the miſchief they can think of, or to maim him in ſuch manner that he remains a cripple for ever after. There are ſome chiefs, however, who take indifferent good care of theſe unhappy people, and who do not ſuffer them to be too cruelly handled; but nothing can come up to their care in watching them. In the day time they are tied by the neck and arm to the timbers of a canoe, and when the journey is by land, there is always one to hold them. In the night-time they are ſtretched along the ground quite naked, and there are cords fixed to hooks planted in the ground, which tie their legs, arms, and neck ſo faſt, that they cannot ſtir, and there are beſides, long cords, which are faſtened to their hands and feet in ſuch manner, that the leaſt motion they make wakens the Indian who lies on theſe cords.

After the warriors have got within a certain diſtance of their village, they halt, and the chief ſends to give notice of his approach. Amongſt ſome nations, as ſoon as the deputy has got near enough to be within hearing, he makes different cries which communicate a general idea of the principal adventures and ſucceſs of the campaign. The firſt ſignifies the number of men killed, by ſo many death-cries. Immediately the young people come out to inform themſelves more particularly; and often a whole village runs out, but only one perſon accoſts the

the envoy, learns of him the detail of the news he brings; as he relates any particular, the other turns towards the reſt of the people and repeats it aloud, and they anſwer by ſo many acclamations or cries of lamentation, as the news prove mournful, or the contrary.

The envoy is afterwards conducted into a cabin, where the elders put the ſame queſtions to him, after which a publick crier invites all the youth to go to meet the warriors, and the women to carry them refreſhments. In other parts they think of nothing at firſt but bewailing thoſe they have loſt. The envoy makes only death-cries. No body comes out to meet him; but on his entering the village he finds all the people aſſembled, he relates in few words all that has paſſed, and then retires to his cabin, where they bring him ſomething to eat, and for ſome time they are wholly occupied in mourning for the dead.

This term being expired, another cry is made, to denote the victory. Then every one wipes off his tears, and there is nothing but rejoicing; ſomething like this is done, at the return from hunting; the women who have remained in the village go out to meet them, on being informed of their approach, and before they are acquainted with the ſucceſs of their hunting, they ſignify by their tears the number of deaths ſince their departure. To return to the warriors, the moment the women join them is properly the beginning of the ſufferings of the priſoners; likewiſe, when ſome of them have at firſt been appointed to be adopted, which is not lawful in every nation, their future parents, whom they take care to inform, go to a greater

greater diſtance to receive them, and conduct them to their cabbins by round about ways. The captives are generally long in the dark with reſpect to their fate, and there are few who eſcape the firſt ſallies of the rage of the women. But this article would carry me too far, and we muſt ſet out tomorrow betimes.

*I am*, &c.

LETTER

# LETTER XVI.

*First reception of the priſoners. Triumph of the warriors. Diſtribution of the captives; in what manner their fate is decided, with what happens afterwards. The inhumanity with which thoſe are treated who are condemned to death. The courage they ſhew. Negotiations of the* Indians.

*Entrance of Lake Erié*, May 27*th*, 1721.

*Madam*,

I Set out this morning from the Falls of Niagara, and had about ſeven leagues to make before I got to Lake Erié, which I have done without any trouble. We laid our account with not lying here this night; and while my people were rowing with all their might, I made a good progreſs in a new letter, and now whilſt they are taking a little repoſe I ſhall finiſh, and give it to ſome Canadians going to Montreal, whom I met with in this place. I ſhall reſume my account where I left it off in my laſt.

All

All the priſoners who are condemned to die, and thoſe whoſe fate is not yet determined, are, as I have already told you, Madam, abandoned to the women, who go before the warriors, and it is ſurpriſing how they are able to ſurvive all the torments they make them ſuffer. If any one has loſt in the war a ſon, huſband, or any other perſon who was dear to her, were it thirty years before, ſhe becomes a fury, ſhe fixes upon the firſt who falls into her hands, and it cannot be conceived to what length her rage will tranſport her. She has no regard either to humanity or decency, and at every blow ſhe gives, you would think he would fall dead at her feet, if you did not know how ingenious theſe barbarians are in protracting the moſt unheard of torments. The whole night is ſpent in this manner at the encampment of the warriors.

Next day is a day of triumph for the conquerors. The Iroquois and ſome others affect a great modeſty, and ſtill a greater diſintereſtedneſs on theſe occaſions. The chiefs enter the village firſt by themſelves, without any marks of victory, obſerving a profound ſilence, and retire to their cabins, without ſhewing that they have the leaſt pretenſions upon any of the captives. But amongſt other nations affairs are carried on in a different manner; the chief marches at the head of his company with the air of a conqueror, his lieutenant comes after him, and is preceded by a crier whoſe buſineſs is to repeat the death-cry. The warriors follow two and two, the priſoners being in the middle crowned with flowers, their face and hair painted, holding a ſtick in one hand and a chichicoué in the other, their body almoſt naked, their arms tied above the elbow with a cord, the extremities of which are held by

by the warriors, and ſinging all the while their death-ſong to the beat of the chichikoué.

This ſong is at the ſame time extremely fierce and doleful, the captive diſcovering nothing that has the leaſt appearance of a perſon that has been vanquiſhed, or is under affliction. The purport of this ſong is as follows: "I am brave and undaunted, and fear neither death nor the cruelleſt torments; thoſe who fear them are cowards and leſs than women; life is nothing to a man that has courage; may rage and deſpair choak all my enemies; why cannot I devour them and drink up their blood to the laſt drop." The priſoners are made to halt from time to time, the Indians meanwhile flocking round them, dancing themſelves and cauſing them to dance which they ſeem to do very chearfully, relating all the time the braveſt actions of their lives, and mentioning the names of all thoſe whom they have killed or burnt. They take particular notice of thoſe in whom the aſſiſtants are moſtly intereſted; and it may be ſaid, that their chief deſign is to incenſe the arbiters of their fate more and more againſt them. Theſe bravados ſeldom fail to provoke the fury of all who hear them, and their vanity frequently coſts them dear. But from the manner in which they bear the cruelleſt treatment, one ſhould think that tormenting them is doing them a pleaſure.

Sometimes they are forced to run between two rows of Indians armed with ſtones and cudgels, who ſtrike them as if they intended to knock them down at every blow. This, however, never happens, for even when they ſeem to ſtrike at random, and to be actuated only by fury, they

take care never to touch any part where a blow might prove mortal. During this operation any one has the liberty to ſtop the ſufferer, who is likewiſe permitted to ſtand in his defence, though it is ſeldom done to any purpoſe. As ſoon as they arrive at the village, they are led from cabbin to cabbin, and are every where treated in the ſame manner. Here they pluck off a nail, there they take off a finger, either with their teeth, or a bad knife which cuts like a ſaw; an old man tears off their fleſh to the bones, a child pierces them with an awl wherever he can, a woman beats them unmercifully till her arms fall down with fatigue; all this time none of the warriors lay hands on them, tho' they are ſtill their maſters. They are not even ſuffered to be maimed without their permiſſion, which is ſeldom granted. This excepted, every one may make them ſuffer what torments he pleaſes, and if they are led about in ſeveral villages, either of the ſame nation, or of their neighbours, or allies, who happen to deſire it, they every where meet with the ſame reception.

Theſe preliminaries over, they ſet about dividing the captives whoſe lot depends upon thoſe into whoſe power they are delivered up. As ſoon as the council, where their fate has been determined is over, a crier calls an aſſembly of the people in the ſquare, where a diſtribution is made without any noiſe or diſpute whatſoever. Thoſe women who have loſt their ſons or huſbands in the war, are commonly ſatisfied in the firſt place. Afterwards they fulfil the engagements entered into with thoſe from whom they have received collars of Wampum; if there is not a ſufficient number of priſoners for this purpoſe, the defect is ſupplied with ſcalps, which are worn by way of ornament on days of rejoicing,

but at other times are hung up at the gates of their cabbins. If on the other hand the number of priſoners is more than ſufficient for theſe purpoſes, the overplus is ſent to their allies. The place of a chief is never filled up but by a chief, or by two or three ſlaves, who are always burnt, even though the chief had died a natural death. The Iroquois never fail to ſet apart ſome priſoners for the uſe of the publick, in which caſe the council diſpoſes of them as they think proper; but the matrons ſtill have the power to abrogate their ſentence, being abſolute ſovereigns of the life and death of thoſe who have been condemned or abſolved by the council.

The warriors, in ſome nations, never diveſt themſelves entirely of the right of diſpoſing of their priſoners, and thoſe to whom the council has diſtributed them, are obliged to make reſtitution to them if demanded; which, however, ſeldom happens, but when it does, they are alſo obliged to reſtore the pledges they have received from thoſe who had contracted for theſe priſoners. If upon their arrival, the warriors declare their intentions upon this point, they are ſeldom oppoſed. In general, the greateſt number of the priſoners of war are condemned to die, or to a very ſevere ſlavery in which their life is never ſecure. Some are adopted, and from that time their condition differs in nothing from that of the children of the nation; they aſſume all the rights of thoſe whoſe place they occupy, and frequently enter into the ſpirit of the nation, of which they are become members, in ſuch a manner, that they make no difficulty of going to war againſt their own countrymen. By this policy, the Iroquoiſe have hitherto ſupported themſelves, for having been conſtantly at war from time immemorial, with all the nations round them, they

muſt have been, by this time, reduced to nothing had they not taken care to naturalize a large proportion of their priſoners of war.

It ſometimes happens that inſtead of ſending the overplus of the captives to other villages, they preſent theirs to private perſons, who did not demand any, who, in ſuch a caſe, are not ſo much their maſters as not to be obliged to conſult the chiefs of the council what they are to do with them, or elſe to adopt them. If the firſt caſe, he to whom a ſlave has been given, ſends for him by one of his family, he then ties him up to the door of his cabbin, after which he calls together the chiefs of the council, to whom he declares his intentions, and aſks their advice, which they generally give in a manner conformable to his inclinations. In the ſecond caſe, on delivering the priſoner into his hands, they tell him. "It is a long time ſince we have "been deprived of ſuch a one, your friend, or re"lation, who was the ſupport of our village." Or, "We regret the ſpirit of ſuch a one, whom "you have loſt, and who, by his wiſdom main"tained the tranquillity of the publick, he muſt "this day be made to appear again, he was too "dear to us, as well as too valuable a perſonage to "defer any longer bringing him back to life; we "therefore replace him upon his mattraſs in the "perſon of this captive."

There are ſome private perſons, however, probably of more credit and reputation than common, who receive the gift of a priſoner without any condition at all, and with full liberty to diſpoſe of him as they ſhall think proper; on delivering him into ſuch a perſon's hands the council addreſs him in this manner. "Behold wherewithal to repair the loſs

"of

" of ſuch a one, and to glad the heart of his fa-
" ther, his mother, his wife and his children; whe-
" ther you chuſe to make them drink the broth
" of this fleſh, or rather incline to replace the de-
" ceaſed upon his mattraſs in the perſon of this cap-
" tive. You may do with him according to your
" will and pleaſure."

As ſoon as a priſoner is adopted he is carried to the cabbin, where he is to remain, and his bonds are immediately looſed. He is waſhed with warm water, and his wounds are probed, if he has any, and were they even full of worms he is ſoon cured; nothing is omitted to make him forget all the evils he has ſuffered, victuals are ſet before him, and he is properly dreſſed. In a word, they could not do more for the child of the houſe, or even for the perſon whom he reſtores again to life, as they expreſs themſelves. Some days after this a feaſt is made, in the courſe of which he receives in a ſolemn manner the name of him whom he replaces, and from thenceforth not only ſucceeds to all his rights, but likewiſe becomes liable to all his obligations.

Amongſt the Hurons and Iroquois thoſe who are condemned to be burnt, are ſometimes as well treated from the firſt, and even till the moment of their execution, as thoſe who are adopted. It is probable theſe are victims fattened for ſacrifice, and they are indeed offered up to the god of war: the only difference betwixt them and other captives, is that their faces are ſmeared over with black. Excepting this, they treat them in the beſt manner poſſible, ſetting before them the beſt food, never ſpeaking to them but with an air of friendſhip, calling them ſon, brother, nephew, according as they themſelves are related to the perſon whoſe manes the priſoners are

to appeaſe by their death: ſometimes they yield the girls up to their pleaſures, who ſerve them as wives during the time they have yet to live. But when they are appriſed of their fate, they muſt be carefully watched for fear they ſhould eſcape. For this reaſon it is often concealed from them.

As ſoon as every thing is ready for the execution they are delivered up to a woman, who from the fondneſs of a mother paſſes at once into the rage of a fury, and from the tendereſt careſſes to the moſt extreme tranſports of madneſs. She begins with invoking the ſhade of him whom ſhe is about to avenge. "Approach, ſays ſhe, thou art going to "be appeaſed; I am preparing for thee a feaſt, "drink deep draughts of this broth which is now "to be poured out before thee; receive the victim "prepared for thee in the perſon of this warrior; "he ſhall be burnt and put into the chaldron; "burning hatchets ſhall be applied to his ſkin; his "ſcalp ſhall be flea'd off; they will drink out of "his ſcull; ceaſe therefore thy complaining; thou "ſhalt be fully ſatisfied." This formula, which is properly the ſentence of death, often varies conſiderably in the expreſſion, but is always nearly the ſame in ſubſtance. A crier then calls the priſoner out of his cabbin, proclaiming with a loud voice the intentions of the perſon to whom he belongs, and concludes with exhorting the youth to perform their parts well. A ſecond herald then advances, and addreſſing himſelf to the priſoner, tells him, "Thou "art going to be burnt, my brother, be of good "courage." He again anſwers coolly, "It is "well, I thank thee." Immediately the whole village ſet up a loud ſhout, and the priſoner is conducted to the place appointed for his execution.

The

The priſoner is commonly tied to a poſt by the hands and feet, but in ſuch a manner that he may turn quite round it. Sometimes when the execution is to be in a cabbin, whence there is no danger of his making his eſcape, he is not tied, but ſuffered to run from one end to the other. Before they begin burning him, he ſings his death ſong for the laſt time, then he makes a recital of all the gallant actions of his life, and almoſt always in a manner the moſt inſulting to the by-ſtanders. Afterwards he exhorts them not to ſpare him, but to remember that he is a man and a warrior. I am much miſtaken, if the ſufferer's ſinging with all his might, and inſulting and defying his executioners, as they commonly do to their laſt breath, is the circumſtance that ought to ſurpriſe us moſt in thoſe tragical and barbarous ſcenes; for there is in this a fierceneſs which elevates the mind, which tranſports it, and even withdraws it from the thoughts of what they ſuffer, and at the ſame time prevents their ſhewing too much ſenſibility. Beſides, the motions they make divert their thoughts, and produce the ſame effect, nay ſometimes a greater, than cries and tears would do. In the laſt place, they are ſenſible there is no mercy to be expected, and deſpair gives them ſtrength, and inſpires them with reſolution.

This ſpecies of inſenſibility is not however ſo univerſal as a great many have believed. It is no rare thing to hear theſe wretches crying in ſuch a manner as would pierce the hardeſt hearts, which however only rejoices the actors and aſſiſtants. But as to this inhumanity in the Indians, of which human nature could hardly have been thought capable, I believe they have attained to it by degrees, and that practice has inſenſibly accuſtomed them to it; that the deſire of making their enemy ſhow a

meanneſs of ſpirit, the inſults which the ſufferers never fail to offer to their tormentors, the deſire of revenge, a ruling paſſion in theſe people, which they never think ſufficiently gratified while thoſe who are the objects of it continue to ſhew the leaſt ſparks of remaining courage, and finally, ſuperſtition have all a great ſhare in it: for what exceſſes will not a falſe zeal, inflamed by ſo many paſſions, produce!

I ſhall not give you a detail, Madam, of every thing that paſſes at theſe horrible executions. It would engage me too far, becauſe there is no uniformity, nor any rules in them but what are ſuggeſted by fury and caprice. There are often as many actors as ſpectators, that is to ſay, inhabitants of the village, men, women and children, every one doing as much miſchief as poſſible, and none but thoſe belonging to the cabbin to which the priſoner had been delivered, refraining from tormenting him; at leaſt this is the practice among ſome nations. They commonly begin with burning the feet, then the legs, thus aſcending to the head, and ſometimes they make the puniſhment laſt for a whole week, as happened to a gentleman of Canada among the Iroquois. Thoſe are leaſt ſpared, who having been already taken and adopted, or ſet at liberty, are afterwards retaken. They are looked upon as unnatural children, or ungrateful perſons, who have made war upon their parents and benefactors, and no mercy whatever is ſhewn them. It ſometimes happens that the patient is left at his liberty, even tho' he is not executed in a cabbin, and ſuffered to ſtand on his own defence, which he does leſs thro' hope of ſaving his life, than out of a deſire to revenge his death before hand, and to acquire the reputation of dying like a brave man. There have been many inſtances to prove what a prodigious degree of ſtrength and courage ſuch a reſolution is capable

capable of inſpiring, of which the following, atteſted by perſons of credit who were eye-witneſſes, is one very remarkable.

An Iroquois captain of the canton called *Onneyouth*, rather choſe to expoſe himſelf to the worſt that could happen, than to diſhonour himſelf by flying, which he reckoned of dangerous conſequence from the ill example it would give to the youth under his command. He fought a long time like a man reſolved to die with his arms in his hands, but the Hurons his enemies were reſolved on taking him if poſſible alive. Luckily for him and thoſe who were taken priſoners with him, they were conducted to a village where there happened to be ſome miſſionaries, who were allowed the full liberty of converſing with them. Theſe fathers found them of an admirable docility, which they looked upon as a beginning of the grace of their converſion; accordingly they inſtructed and baptized them; they were all burnt in a few days afterwards, and teſtified to their laſt moments a ſort of conſtancy, which the Indians were not till then acquainted with, and which, infidels as they were, they attributed to the virtue of the ſacrament of baptiſm.

The Iroquois captain, notwithſtanding, believed he might lawfully do his enemies all the miſchief in his power, and delay his death as long as poſſible. They had made him aſcend a ſort of ſtage or theatre, where they began by burning his body all over, without the leaſt mercy, to which he appeared as inſenſible as if he had felt no pain; but on perceiving one of his companions whom they were tormenting juſt by him, betray ſome ſigns of weakneſs, he teſtified a great deal of uneaſineſs, and omitted nothing in his power to encourage him to

bear

bear his ſufferings with patience, thro' the hopes of the happineſs awaiting them in heaven, and he had the ſatisfaction to ſee him expire like a brave man and a chriſtian.

Then all thoſe who had put his companion to death fell upon him with ſuch rage as if they would tear him to pieces. He appeared not at all moved at it, and they were now at a loſs to find any part of his body that was ſenſible to pain; when one of the executioners, after making an inciſion in the ſkin quite round his head, tore it entirely off by mere force and violence. The pain made him fall into a ſwoon, when his tormentors believing him dead, left him. Upon his recovery a moment after, and ſeeing nothing near him but the dead body of his friend, he took up a firebrand with both hands, ſcorched and flead as they were, defying his executioners to come near him. This uncommon reſolution terrified them, they made hideous ſhouts, ran to arms, ſome laying hold of burning coals, and and others ſeizing red hot irons, and all at once poured upon him; he ſtood the brunt of their fury with the courage of a man in deſpair, and even made them retire. The fire that ſurrounded him ſerved him for an entrenchment, which he compleated with the ladders they had uſed to aſcend the ſcaffold, and thus fortifying himſelf, and making a ſort of citadel of his funeral pile, which was now become the theatre of his bravery, and armed with the inſtruments of his torture, he was for a conſiderable time the terror of a whole canton, and not one had the heart to approach him, tho' he was more than half burnt to death, and the blood trickled from all parts of his body.

His

His foot happening to ſlip, as he was endeavouring to avoid a fire-brand darted at him, delivered him once more into the hands of his murderers, who, as you may well imagine, made him pay dear for the terror he had put them into. After being tired with tormenting him, they threw him into the middle of a great coal fire, where they left him, fully perſuaded he would never be able to riſe from it. But they were deceived, for when they leaſt thought of it, they beheld him armed with fire-brands running towards the village, as if he was going to ſet it on fire. All hearts were frozen with fear, and no one dared to face him, when juſt as he had almoſt reached the firſt cabbin, a ſtick thrown at him, and falling between his legs, brought him to the ground, and they laid hold of him before he could recover himſelf. Here they firſt cut off his hands and feet, and rolled him upon burning embers, and then threw him below the burning trunk of a tree, the whole village gathering round him to enjoy the ſpectacle.

He loſt ſuch a quantity of blood as almoſt extinguiſhed the fire, ſo that they had now no manner of apprehenſion remaining of any future attempt. He made however another, which ſtruck terror into the moſt undaunted. He crept upon his knees and elbows with ſo much vigour, and with ſuch a threatning aſpect, as made thoſe who were neareſt him retire to a diſtance, more indeed out of aſtoniſhment than fear, for what could he have done mutilated and diſmembered as he was? In this dreadful condition the miſſionaries, who had never loſt ſight of him, endeavoured to put him in mind of thoſe eternal truths with which he had been at firſt ſo much penetrated; he liſtened with attention, and ſeemed for ſome time entirely taken up with the thoughts

of

of his ſalvation, when one of the Hurons taking advantage of this opportunity, ſtruck off his head.

If thoſe nations, Madam, make war like Barbarians, it muſt however be allowed that in treaties of peace, and generally in all negociations, they diſplay ſuch a dexterity, addreſs and elevation of ſoul, as would do honour to the moſt civilized nations. They never trouble themſelves about making conqueſts, or extending their dominions. Some nations know no manner of dominion or ſovereignty; and thoſe who have never been at a diſtance from their native country, and who look upon themſelves as the lords and ſovereigns of the ſoil, are not ſo jealous of their property as to find fault with newcomers who ſettle on it, provided they do not attempt to moleſt them. The points which are the only ſubjects of their treaties, are to make alliances againſt powerful enemies; to put an end to a war which may have become burthenſome to both parties; or rather to treat of a ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities, for I have already obſerved, that every war is everlaſting among the Indians, when it happens between different nations. Thus a treaty of peace is very little to be depended on, whilſt any of the parties are capable of moleſting or giving uneaſineſs to the other.

During the whole time of the negociation, and even before it commences, their chief care is, that they may not ſeem to make the firſt advances, or if they do, they uſe all their addreſs to make their enemy believe that it does not proceed from fear or neceſſity; and this laſt is managed very artfully. A plenipotentiary abates nothing of his haughtineſs, even when the affairs of his country are in the worſt

ſituation;

ſituation; and he has generally the good fortune to perſuade thoſe with whom he is treating, that it is their intereſt to put an end to hoſtilities, tho' they have been the conquerors. It is beſides of the laſt conſequence to himſelf, to employ all his eloquence and addreſs, for ſhould his propoſals happen not to be reliſhed, he muſt keep well on his guard, a blow with a hatchet being ſometimes the only anſwer given on ſuch occaſions. He is not out of danger even if he eſcapes the firſt ſurpriſe, but muſt lay his account with being purſued and burnt, if taken, provided ſuch an act of violence can be juſtified by any pretext, ſuch as that of repriſals for a like proceeding. Thus it happened to ſome French amongſt the Iroquois, to whom they had been ſent on the part of the governor general; and the miſſionaries, who for ſome years reſided among thoſe Barbarians, altho' they were under the ſafeguard of the public faith, and in ſome meaſure agents for the colony, yet were every day in dread of being ſacrificed to ſome ancient grudge, or becoming victims to the intrigues of the governors of New York.

It is ſurpriſing, in ſhort, that nations who never make war from motives of intereſt, and who even carry their diſintereſtedneſs to ſuch a height, that their warriors never load themſelves with the ſpoils of the vanquiſhed, and if they bring home any booty, abandon it to the firſt that pleaſes to take it; and laſtly, who take up arms for glory only, or to revenge themſelves on their enemies; it is, I ſay, quite aſtoniſhing to ſee them ſo well verſed and practiſed in the greateſt refinements of policy, and even ſo as to keep miniſters reſiding amongſt their enemies at the public expence. They have one cuſtom with reſpect to theſe agents, which at firſt ſight appears ſufficiently extravagant, tho' it may be reckoned

koned prudent enough at the ſame time, which is that they never pay any regard to any intelligence they receive from theſe penſioners, if it is not accompanied with ſome preſent. Their policy here ariſes no doubt from this conſideration, that in order to give an entire credit to any piece of intelligence, it is not only neceſſary that he who communicates it ſhould have nothing to hope from it, but even that it ſhould be attended with ſome expence to him, both becauſe the intereſt of the public ſhould be his only motive for ſending it, and alſo that he may not raſhly trouble them with trifling and ſuperficial matters.

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End of the FIRST VOLUME.

2 JY 61

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2 JY 61